DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 234 803 IR 050 435

AUTHOR Payne, Philip, Ed.
TITLE The Part-Time Student in the Library.
INSTITUTION City of London Polytechnic (England). Library and Learning Resources Service.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-904264-7[illegible]
PUB DATE Apr 83
NOTE 232p.; Papers [illegible]ference held at City of London Polytechn[illegible] England, April 15-16, 1982).
AVAILABLE FROM LLRS Publ[illegible] City of London Polytechnic, Calcutta [illegible], Old Castle Street, London, England E1 7NT (10 British pounds).
PUB TYPE Collected Works - Conference Proceedings (021) -- Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Libraries; *Adult Education; Evening Students; Extension Education; Foreign Countries; *Information Needs; *Library Extension; Library Research; *Library Services; Open Universities; *Part Time Students; Postsecondary Education; Public Libraries
IDENTIFIERS Australia; *United Kingdom

ABSTRACT

The 23 papers presented at this conference deal with the information needs of institutionally-based part-time students in United Kingdom universities, polytechnics, and further education colleges, and with library and information services for the adult learner. Keith Percy and John Simpson provide overviews on the number and types of part-time students and the library services provided for them. Seven papers report on library research and experimental projects concerned with part-time students at the University of Southampton (Elizabeth Corney), Ulster Polytechnic (Trevor Lyttle), Coventry (Lanchester) Polytechnic (Barry West), City of London Polytechnic (Philip Payne), Farnborough College of Technology (Peter Sweetman), an East Midlands adult education center (Stephen Drodge), and Kent County Library (David Harrison). Four papers describe current library services, problems, and proposals for expanded services at City of London Polytechnic (Rosemary Moon), Glasgow College of Technology (Paul Blount), Chelsea College of the University of London (Anthony Quinsee), and Polytechnic of North London (Edward Dudley). Ten papers discuss library services for "flexistudy" students (Marie Adams), library services at the Open College (Peter Maltby), needs of part-time students in Australia (Piers M. O. Stonham), problems of and requirements for providing off-campus library services (Raymond Fisher), possibilities of using Prestel to reach part-time students (Clive Cochrane), a model for providing educational information to adult learners (Linda Butler), needs of self-directed learners (Sheila M. Dale), lending of college-produced audio cassettes to part-time students (Carolyn Kennett), library needs of part-time students engaged in research in the humanities (Nancy Hyde), and lending of microfiche readers and basic reference materials on microfiche to part-time students (John Horrocks). Conclusions with recommendations for action and a list of conference participants are also provided. (ESR)

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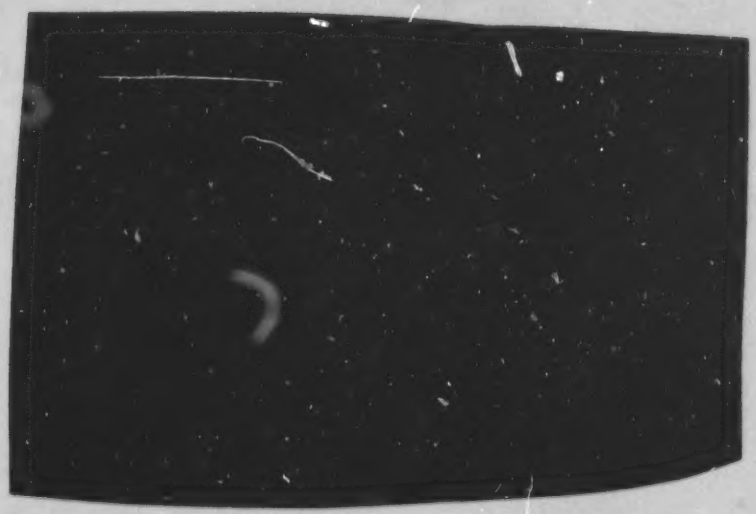

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LLRS PUBLICATIONS
1983 (2)

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British Library CIP data

The part-time student in the library.
1. Libraries and students - Congresses
2. Students, Part-time - Congresses
I. Payne, Philip, 1952-
027 Z718.7

ISBN 0-904264-71-8

LLRS Publications,
City of London Polytechnic,
Calcutta House,
Old Castle Street,
London,
E1 7NT
England

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INTRODUCTION

On April 15th and 16th 1982, sixty-five people gathered at City of London Polytechnic to consider the needs of part-time students for library services and how they might best be met.

The conference, The Part-Time Student in the Library: From Research to Action, was the first general conference on all types of part-time students and library use to be held in the United Kingdom. The conference had four main aims:

* to review recent research on the relationships between part-time students and library use

* to receive reports on recent experiments in library services to part-time students

* to consider library activities within the context of the general learning problems of part-time students

* to point a way forward for libraries to improve services to part-time students

An unusual feature in the organisation of the conference was a deliberate attempt to encourage participants to share their experience and to be actively involved in the discussions. Consequently, at an early stage of the organisation, a call for papers was sent to libraries and individuals who were likely to be interested. The response to this call for papers was excellent. A total of 23 papers were finally presented either in the general conference sessions or in the conference working groups. They dealt mainly with institutionally-based part-time students in universities, polytechnics, or further education colleges, although there were also papers on libraries and the adult independent learner and on information and advice services for adult learners. Papers were presented on small-scale research projects, carried out by individual libraries and never before reported, as well as on larger, externally-funded projects. They were presented on how librarians were meeting the challenge of educational innovations such as "flexistudy" and the Open College. Accounts of novel and interesting ways of providing library services to part-time students were given.

To accommodate the wealth of material, the conference sessions consisted mainly of brief reports of either research work or accounts of experiments in the provision of services. Papers, relating to these brief reports, were generally circulated in advance to participants. Speakers therefore only needed to bring out the more salient points. These general sessions were ably chaired by Alan Pritchard, then Deputy Head of Library Services at the Polytechnic and now Data Manager. The emphasis in these sessions was upon questions and discussion arising from the circulated papers. Other papers, also circulated in advance, were presented at the seven working groups which took place on the second day of the conference:

* Libraries, independent learning and the part-time student
(Leader: Sheila Dale)

* Learning to use the library
(Leader: Rosemary Moon)

* Promoting library use by part-time students
(Leader: Brian Mardall)

* Stock approaches in academic libraries
(Leader: Philip Payne)

* Libraries and the needs of distance learners for learning resources
(Leader: Clive Cochrane)

* Library provision for part-time postgraduate students
(Leader: Barry West)

* Libraries and the adult learner
(Leader: Raymond Fisher)

The conclusions and recommendations of the conference (pp. 245-254) stem mainly from notes taken of the discussions at the above working groups and at the final plenary session of the conference. They were subsequently edited and sent to all participants at the conference for comment and suggested alterations. Some changes were made in the light of the suggestions received. Only one participant commented that they did not feel that the conclusions and recommendations accurately reflected the discussions at the conference.

The conference had begun with a plenary address by Keith Percy (Organising Tutor for Extra-Mural Studies at Lancaster University) entitled "Learning, studying, and the adult part-time student" (pp. 3-17). The aim of this paper was to place the discussions concerning library provision to part-time students in an educational context. Drawing upon his research on the Open University and on post-initial education provision in the North-West of England, the speaker considered the number and range of part-time students, the difficulties they face in studying part-time and the likely future prospects for part-time study.

The papers have now been published, so that they can be available to a wider audience. Speakers have been given the opportunity to amend and update their papers for publication.

The City of London Polytechnic would like to thank the contributors for allowing their papers to be reproduced and preparing them for publication.

Philip Payne
Planning and Development Librarian
City of London Polytechnic

April 1983

PAPERS PREPARED FOR AND PRESENTED AT THE CONFERENCE

LEARNING, STUDYING AND THE ADULT PART-TIME STUDENT

Keith Percy
Organising Tutor for Extra-Mural Studies
University of Lancaster

Drawing upon his recent research on educational opportunities for adults and his experience of developing opportunities for part-time students, the author presents a framework for reviewing some of the other papers presented at the conference. He considers five main areas: (i) who are the part-time students?, (ii) the place of adult learning in our society, (iii) barriers between adults and access to educational opportunities, (iv) implications for educationalists and librarians, and (v) future trends in the education of adults.

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1. INTRODUCTORY

This paper was prepared after I had had the advantage of reading the papers written for this Conference which were circulated in advance. Therefore, in this, the first paper to be delivered at the Conference it seemed sensible to attempt to provide a framework or setting against which some of these papers might be reviewed. Necessarily, the paper (delivered to a Conference mainly attended by librarians) reflects the point of view of someone who, firstly, has an institutional responsibility for developing opportunities for part-time students and, secondly, has been considerably involved in researching the provision of educational opportunities for adults. The sub-title of the Conference is, significantly, "from research to action" and this paper refers to a range of research into the education of adults, some of it unpublished.

The paper falls into five linked sections:

a) Who are the part-time students?

b) The place of adult learning in our society.

c) Barriers between adults and access to, and success in, educational opportunities - a review of findings from two Lancaster research projects.

d) Implications for educationalists and librarians.

e) Future trends in the education of adults.

2. WHO ARE THE PART-TIME STUDENTS?

The majority of papers pre-circulated for this Conference relate to problems and developments in academic (as opposed to public) libraries in providing services to part-time students who are enrolled on courses of one kind or another, usually at higher or advanced further education level. Nevertheless, it would be wise to begin by setting the parameters of dicussion rather more widely, even for institutional libraries. For this paper seeks to argue that librarians in post-compulsory educational institutions need to consider not only if new kinds of adult students are coming on to courses but also to think whether the concept of a "course" (requiring classroom attendance so many days or evenings per week per term) may not require modification or extension. Furthermore, a theme of this paper is that academic and public libraries should develop wider responsibilities for the support of the often unacknowledged independent and part-time students that exist among the general adult population.

To what extent, then, are we a "learning society" in this country? How many adults in our society at any one time are engaged in learning activities which, in the nature of things, are normally part-time? Among the Conference papers are two excellent contributions from the library of the Open University, those of John Simpson and Sheila Dale, which are both relevant to these questions. Both papers quote figures from the periodical Education of May 1981 ("Adult and continuing: an 'Education' Digest" 1981). Simpson quotes the conclusion that "6 million people in the UK receive some form of part-time education or training each year" which is 11% of the total population, or something like 15% of the adult population (Simpson 1983). Dale refers to the related calculation that between one third and one half of all adults engage in continuing education of one kind or another, during their adult life span (Dale 1983). Moreover, Arthur Stock, Director of the National Institute of Adult Education, recently quoted marginally more optimistic calculations of his own of the adult participation rate in continuing education classes and courses - in particular suggesting that the rate of participation during the adult lifespan was close to 50% (Stock 1982). The recently published Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education national population survey on educational participation, using sophisticated market research techniques and a stratified population sample, reached broadly similar conclusions. It found that 47% of people interviewed claimed either to have taken part or to be currently engaged in some form of post-compulsory education or training (Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education 1982, p.15). Calculations which have come out of one of my own Lancaster research projects suggest that, in the North West of England, 20-25% of the adult population at any one time are participating in learning activities made available by, or in, an organisation or provider. The percentage is higher because our research suggests to us that the adult learning activities involved in membership of the great range of voluntary associations, organisations, clubs and societies that exist in our society are normally underestimated by commentators (University of Lancaster, Post-Initial Education Project 1982).

It is necessary, of course, to look beyond so-called "participation" rates because the question "participation in what?" must be addressed. The statistics just quoted do not refer to participation in all adult learning or to an attempt to assess the total quantity of learning activity among all adults in our society: they refer, in fact, to the headcounting of the contacts between adults and learning providers or agencies. They ignore learning or attempts to learn in which adults engage without recourse to a provider or even, often, without recourse to a librarian or library. The paper by Sheila Dale of the Open University makes superfluous any attempt here to discuss adult independent learning (Dale 1983). As she indicates, the work of Allen Tough, his students and international co-workers, despite the methodological and conceptual questions which can be raised, is highly significant for our understanding of the extent of adult learning and of the roles of adult educators and librarians equally (Tough 1971).

As Dale says, Tough's findings about Canadian adults can be summarised as showing that "the typical person undertakes about 8 learning projects a year and spends an average of about 90 hours on each project" (a project is defined as a deliberate attempt, normally self-planned, to gain and retain knowledge and skill and involving a series of sessions amounting to at least 7 hours in 6 months) (Dale 1983, p.168). In fact we are desperately short of research into the nature and extent of adult independent learning in this country and that is a major research priority. It is reasonable to hypothesise that if research similar to Tough's was undertaken here, comparable findings would result.

3. THE PLACE OF ADULT LEARNING IN SOCIETY

The foregoing discussion of the extent of adult participation in provided education and in independent learning was occasioned by the observation that the policy and practice of adult educators is frequently negative, pessimistic and too dependent on simple counting of the numbers of adults attending formally provided part-time or full-time courses in publicly funded agencies. It seems safe to assert that we should accept that the extent of adult learning is much greater than is normally acknowledged, and that there are roles for adult educators and librarians in supporting and facilitating non-formal, informal and independent learning. A theoretical underpinning for this view of adult learning in our society can be found in the work of such humanistic psychologists as Maslow (Maslow 1973) and Rogers (Rogers 1969). Carl Rogers, for example, begins from the premise that "human beings have a natural potentiality for learning", that being curious and seeking to satisfy that curiosity are as natural aspects of being human as being hungry and seeking to satisfy the hunger (Rogers 1969, pp. 157-8). However, social factors can intervene and affect that natural potentiality for learning - social and environmental position, life experience, the influence of peers, the influence of formal initial schooling can all keep alive, dull or quench the curiosity, the potential for learning. Social and educational experience can either create or remove barriers between the adult and the realisation of his drive to learn. This is the kind of framework within which positive policy and provision for the part-time student in the library can be viewed. Adult educators and librarians alike should be concerned with a notion of human life and society in which learning is perceived potentially as the proper concern of all adults, certainly not just adults in post-compulsory courses, and seek to identify and to remove the barriers to that learning which are within their control.

4. BARRIERS BETWEEN ADULTS AND ACCESS TO, AND SUCCESS IN EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

This section of the paper considers the findings of two recent adult education research projects which make some small contribution to our understanding of some of these barriers. The first is the Lancaster based project which was mentioned earlier in the paper: it was sponsored by ACACE and funded by the DES to survey the total provision of educational opportunities in the North West and was known as the Post Initial Education (PIE) Project. This was a very large investigation which included 17 separate reports and investigations which contributed to the overall final report (University of Lancaster, Post-Initial Education Project 1982). The 17 reports include ones on adult education for women, adult education for ethnic minority groups, training of adult educators, accommodation provision for adult education and various others. Here we can touch on four PIE Project reports and isolate from them points which relate to the access of adults to part-time educational opportunities.

The first report is an examination of publicity practice and policy of 80 North West LEA centres and colleges via an evaluation of published materials, interviews and questionnaires to centre and college heads and officers. The Project's conclusion, to put it bluntly, was that publicity and information provision on adult education was often handled in an amateurish fashion. The location of decision-making on the nature of publicity, the publicity medium and its distribution depended on convention and tradition rather than on rational policy. There was a heavy reliance (61% of providers) on prospectuses and brochures; a smaller proportion (32%) used tabloids and newspaper supplements. Only a very few used local radio for example. The project had all the adult education publicity material in its possession evaluated by a journalist with expertise in advertising and marketing. Many brochures and prospectuses, particularly those of colleges of further education, were judged to have serious defects if their purpose was to convey clearcut information; if their purpose was to create interest or to encourage and attract students, they had even greater defects (University of Lancaster, Post-Initial Education Project 1980a).

The second PIE report to be mentioned here is a survey of students in public sector adult education classes in different parts of the North West - over 600 adults reponding from a sample of 900 conducted in November 1979. Among many other things, we asked these students where they got their information about the class which they were attending. The answers were very various and showed the large element of chance at work in the manner in which adults heard about classes. Less than one third had seen a brochure or prospectus published by their LEA. One quarter heard of their class simply by word of mouth often from people who had taken it before. A working-class student was more likely to have got his initial information from a poster or by word of mouth than was a middle-class student, (University of Lancaster, Post-Initial Education Project 1980b).

In the survey there were also questions to test factual knowledge about local and national provision of education for adults. We found that with questions on educational entitlements, and on qualifications needed for courses, there was a markedly low level of accurate knowledge. Our enquiry showed also that these respondents were rather more concerned about the location of a class, its convenience in terms of time and transport, than about its actual cost in terms of class fees (University of Lancaster, Post-Initial Education Project 1980b).

A third PIE report consists of case studies of the five information, advice and counselling schemes operative in the North West in early 1980. During the lifetime of the Project three of these five virtually ceased to operate. The case studies document clearly the significant successes and levels of demand enjoyed by some of these services and the range of roles they played in creating access for adults to the kind of educational opportunity they wanted or came to recognise was needed by them. The report also shows how dependent these services were on short-term finance, mainly MSC, and on shifting patterns of co-operation between representatives of different providers and of different agencies, including librarians (Percy, Langham and Adams 1982).

The fourth and final PIE report which can be mentioned here is concerned with public libraries and adult education in the North West of England. The 62 North West public libraries were surveyed by postal questionnaire. Responses covering 58 libraries (by 44 librarians) were received - an excellent response rate. Among the results of the survey was our impression of the variety of the contact between librarians and adult educators ranging from the non-existent (in the case of 3 libraries) to the close (20% of the total). Whereas 88% reported educational activities of some kind going on in library premises (usually accommodation for a society or WEA class) we were amazed that 15% of libraries did not put adult education literature on public display and noted that only 38% had a member of staff with responsibility for liaison with the adult education service. Several of the librarians responding told us that promotion of awareness of library services would be the key to the development of libraries as centres of support for adult learning (Percy and Willett 1981).

Many of the points which arise from these four project reports produced by the PIE Project relate closely to the findings and observations on adult access to information and educational guidance contained in the paper presented to this Conference by Linda Butler (Butler 1983). That paper adopts, as does the PIE Project research, a notion of the adult, potentially educationally active, who is inhibited by barriers caused by ignorance of what is educationally available, what qualifications are needed, what might be involved and what sources of advice there are.

It is relevant now to turn to the second of the large research projects into the education of adults conducted from the University of Lancaster on which it would be useful to report in this paper. This project has been concerned with monitoring and investigating the Open College of the North West, an initiative in adult education which is designed to remove or to lower some of those barriers to educational access by adults which have just been discussed. A short paper on the Open College is presented separately to this Conference by Peter Maltby (Maltby 1983).

The Open College was originally called the "Alternatives to 'A' level" scheme and was founded on the philosophy that adults wishing to return to study with a view to qualifying themselves for higher education need different and more flexible part-time learning opportunities than are made available to them by GCE 'O' and 'A' level provision in further and adult education colleges. There are no entry qualifications to join the Open College. Open College courses - all of them part-time - are taught in 11 colleges of further education in the North West; syllabuses (which where possible offer the opportunity to consider local or regional subject matter) are developed by college lecturers themselves in consultation with lecturers from Lancaster University and Preston Polytechnic (which two institutions validate the scheme); teaching methods tend to favour the informal and are frequently discussion based; assessment by formal examinations only occurs in the more advanced, pre-higher education units of study; there is an emphasis on personal counselling, particularly at the point of entry; entry is not only at one fixed point in the year, that is September/October; above all adults may join with the clear goal of preparing for higher education, or with that goal as a possibility and the wish to try themselves out in serious study or with no aspirations towards higher education but with the desire to study seriously at the intermediate academic level which the Open College makes possible. There are currently over 1,000 Open College students and dozens have aleady gone on to higher education.

We have been monitoring the Open College and the progress of its students since January 1979. During 1979 there was a substantial investigation through postal questionnaire to all Open College students and face-to-face interviews with a sample of them, and interviews of Open College teaching staff. It was financed by the CET (Percy et al 1980). Between October 1980 and June 1981 there was a follow-up investigation by postal questionnaire and telephone interview of as many as possible of the student respondents of the original 1979 investigation (Percy et al 1982). We thus gathered a great amount of data on this particular group of part-time students: and they represent a group in which higher education institutions appear to be showing more and more interest - adults possibly motivated and capable of higher education entry who may constitute a reserve body of applicants for university, polytechnic and college later in the 1980s if needed.

The 1979 investigation shows that the Open College does not attract manual workers, or members of their families, to return to study (Percy et al 1982). Fewer than 5% of the 306 Open College students who were our respondents in 1979 came from Registrar General categories 4 and 5. On the other hand it was absolutely clear that the Open College had succeeded in attracting to, and retaining at, intermediate level academic study several categories of students who would not have returned to study under other circumstances. 41%, for example, said that they would not, or probably would not, have taken GCE courses if Open College had not existed. Three-quarters of the total of these students had left school before the the age of 17; in particular the interviews revealed a recognisable and sizeable group of Open College students who had been grammar school drop-outs, who had been in the lowest streams at school, had left at 14, 15 or 16 years, who had been "failures" comparatively (or so they felt), who had grown up alienated by institutionalised education and who seemed to have decided never to enter a college or a library again. The Open College had succeeded in recruiting them to return to study by aggressive and professional advertising and marketing, by having an image of being "specially for adults", of not being "like school", by inviting adults for initial counselling, by easing adults into study by having a study techniques course and no formal examinations at the lower level of courses of study. The biggest barrier for returning students entering the Open College, we judged from our investigations, was their own diffidence. One quotation from a student attending an Open College class for the first time will examplify: "I have never been as apprehensive for years. I have dealt with all sorts of people in my life. I have never had my stomach turning over as much as I had that night. It is something to go back to school".

Data from the follow-up study of late 1980-1981, when we succeeded in following up some 185 of the 306 1979 respondents, completes the picture (Percy et al 1982). We find that - 20 months further on - only 22% of the original group were still with the Open College or had passed on to higher education. Nevertheless a further 48% were engaged in, or had recently been engaged in other academic study of an equivalent or higher level, GCE courses usually, and were normally reasonably happy with their progress. What seems to have happened is that, by going out into the market place, the Open College has its greatest success in attracting and inducting these adults back into the education system, giving them confidence and study skills, and - as often as not - passing them on to other courses and possibly to other institutions.

It was very clear from the follow-up study that the 59 respondents who had experienced both GCE and Open College part-time study regarded the two modes of study as very different - Open College as informal, discussion-based, student-centred and more concerned with ideas than information; GCE courses as structured, goal-orientated, and geared to passing examinations. A minority of these adult students said that they preferred GCE to Open College: they preferred its structure and goal orientation, they wanted its discipline and what they called the "realistic" level of feedback which it provided.

5. IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATIONISTS AND LIBRARIANS

That last conclusion, culled from the Open College research project, leads to an obvious, but much neglected, point about adult students. It is very common to speak of the adult, the mature, the part-time student as a homogeneous type to be contrasted with the conventional-age student or the full-time student. But to do so is simplistic. There is not yet (and perhaps never will be) a well-tried body of learning theory as applied to adults upon which one could draw in order to advise generally that learning environments for adults should be structured this way or that. Of course, it has been shown that ageing does affect negatively certain learning functions - e.g. short-term memory, ability to grasp mathematical concepts. Of course, ageing affects relevant physiological funtions - eye-sight, hearing etc. Equally it is claimed that any losses are compensated for by the adult's greater motivation, maturity, and ability to relate new learning to experience. But it seems to be foolhardy to generalise about adult learning with our present level of sophistication, particularly until we have clarified what it is that is being learned - new subject matter, new skills or techniques, or new behaviour. In the early 1970s a research project at Lancaster University under Professor Noel Entwistle showed that by using cluster analysis of a whole range of social and psychological variables and a large student sample one could identify different typologies of ordinary age students who might achieve success in higher education (Entwistle and Wilson 1977). We have no similar sophisticated data and analysis for older students but, if we did, it seems probable that we would similarly be able to talk about different types of adult student prospering in different study environments. Incidentally all the statistics from the Open University, the Open College, universities and polytechnics show that the mature adult student is normally not very much older than the ordinary age student - very often in his or her twenties, almost certainly under forty-five years.

Perhaps a more significant point is that what psychologists can tell us about the effect of ageing upon learning may be less significant than the effect which adult students themselves <u>believe</u> is the effect their age has upon <u>their</u> learning abilities. Reference may be made here to a recent research study by Professor Gordon Roderick and colleagues into mature students in further and higher education in the City of Sheffield (Roderick et al 1981). The report is a considerable compendium of data on mature students together with some sound comments on institutional policy. But there are, in particular, some revealing passages drawn from interviews with mature students which show that subjectively they felt themselves to be different from, even at a disadvantage to, younger students because of their age. Rightly or wrongly, they believed that their analytical abilities were worse, that they processed information more slowly, that they had had poorer study techniques and they were particularly worried over writing essays and doing examinations. Mature students mentioned being terrified by long reading lists issued without tutorial comment. Roderick concludes that a major task in dealing with mature students is to show them that there are relevant study skills which they can acquire and, at the same time and more importantly perhaps, build their confidence and student self-image.

The drift of this paper, and its relevance to this Conference on "the part-time student and the library", should now be clear. The paper has tried to suggest that we live in a learning society and that learning activity is normal for adults. Much adult learning will be self-directed; but if adults do engage with an educational institution then often for domestic, employment or geographical reasons of choice or availability they will be part-time students. Certainly learning for both part-time adult students and independent learners often appears to involve wastage of time or use of inappropriate resources for want of well-informed guidance. We know that in terms of what courses, expertise, opportunities, professional help there are in educational institutions and libraries, the adult is debarred frequently from them by lack of knowledge of what is available, and of whether it is relevant to his or her circumstances. Even if that knowledge barrier is overcome, we have enough research evidence to show that many adults have been alienated from classroom-based learning by their early school experience, have a poor self-image in terms of learning ability, and have great diffidence about their ability to succeed on any type of formally provided course, particularly on one in which their performance is assessed. Moreover there are barriers of travel, time, cost and inconvenience which are common to most adult part-time students on any level.

Many of the papers pre-circulated to this Conference deal comprehensively with the issues facing institutional librarians in seeking to lower these latter barriers which relate to time, inconvenience and travel. These papers talk, for example, about extending opening hours for part-time students, or changing loan periods. This paper argues, on the other hand, that both institutional and public librarians have rather more fundamental roles to play in helping to lower all the barriers between adults and part-time study at all levels. The importance is clear of advertising and marketing educational opportunities, of providing advice to independent learners, of information, advisory and counselling services, of study skills help for adult students in the form of preparation of materials or of induction courses. Because of their expertise librarians have major responsibilities in all these areas, if necessary independently, but more likely in collaboration with teaching colleagues.

6. FUTURE TRENDS IN THE EDUCATION OF ADULTS

Finally, it seems sensible to turn to two future trends in continuing education, one certain and one speculative. In the case of one, the signs are there for all to see. Over the next decade there is going to be a very determined government and governmental quango push towards the development of professional, technical, vocationally related continuing education and an encouragement for it to use either or both of open or distance learning systems and/or new communications technology.

It is clear that the MSC is going to become an even more important purveyor of adult education and that we are all going to be talking regularly about NTIs (New Training Initiative), PEVEs (Post Experience Vocational Education) and PICKUP (Post Industrial Commercial Knowledge Updating Preparation). There will be a large amount of money invested in the "Open Tech" initiative and many part-time adult students will be involved in it, at technician and related levels, many of them attached to public sector colleges. There is currently much talk of increasing the university contribution to high level post experience profit-making short courses relevant to industry, commerce and the public sector. It is not clear if many of the universities will be able to re-tool quickly enough, but some are already trying to design internal structures to make it possible. Several of the papers of this Conference indicate that students on post-experience short courses or on flexi-study or distance learning courses have less need for, or contact with, the college library and its book stock, because their courses have self-contained resources. That may be so, but the implications of this certain trend towards vocational continuing education merit closer attention. The remarks at the end of Barry West's paper to the Conference are indicative and intriguing (West 1983). He predicts a trend in the future to meeting the information needs of the part-time student by direct delivery into the home by means of the microprocessor, the videodisc and videotex.

The other, more speculative, trend which might be discussed relates to the possibility that institutions of higher education (particularly universities - which are traditionally more elitist than polytechnics) may become more of a community resource. Eighteen months ago at Lancaster University we began the "open lecture scheme" and declared that almost all of the 500 or so courses of undergraduate lectures taught on our campus were open to members of the public to attend, free of charge, if there was an empty seat for them. They could also read in the library and borrow books if they paid a deposit. For a rural and inconveniently placed campus we had a high level of usage of this scheme. We surveyed the first year of open lectures attenders and found that half of them had 'A' level or equivalent qualifications and half had not. Some came along for the thrill of being able to tell neighbours they had been to a university lecture; others had for years been following an independent academic interest and welcomed the chance to hear the University "experts" on it (University of Lancaster, Organising Tutor for Extra-Mural Studies 1981). At Lancaster University we are now looking for ways to introduce a range of intermediate part-time or occasional student attendance on our campus: a range between those attending free Open Lectures to those who are registered students on our new part-time degree schemes (and including a provision for independent adult students from the community pursuing learning projects to pay nominal fees for short tutorial consultation with university lecturers).

There has been a great deal of interest from other British universities and polytechnics in the Lancaster developments: many have requested details and some have spoken of following suit. It may be that, in the 1980s, there will be some movement towards institutions of higher education, in addition to their other functions, acting as local resource centres for adult learning in the surrounding community. Of course, at Lancaster we have received favourable publicity and local goodwill from these activities; my colleagues are not totally disinterested: they know that to strengthen their local links and to modify their elitist image can only help in these parlous times. But there are, if you like, new kinds of part-time students here and possible implications for librarians. With the proper cautions and caveats, the Librarian and his staff at Lancaster University are very open to these developments despite the extra problems which they bring. Hopefully most institutional librarians would have the same approach.

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PART-TIME STUDENTS AND SECOND-CLASS CITIZENS: A PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION OF LIBRARY FACILITIES AVAILABLE TO PART-TIMERS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

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Types of part-time course and the Library's provision for them over the past decade are briefly described. The joint project with the Teaching Media Department to investigate the Library needs of students on the Environmental Science Certificate Course is considered together with its cessation owing to financial cuts. Some resulting benefits and changes of emphasis to methods of self-guiding appear to have survived, and it is hoped that the investigation may be partially resumed under the auspices of the Community Enterprise Programme.

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1 GENERAL BACKGROUND

In 1980-81, the University of Southampton enrolled more than 6,103 part-time students of whom 435 were postgraduates, 91 Certificate or Diploma students and an unspecified number (5,507 in the Department of Adult Education alone) on shorter courses directed either at up-dating professional and academic knowledge or at exploring a leisure interest. During the same session, the total number of full-time students amounted to 6,083. While it may be accepted that many of the part-time courses provided by this department are not of degree level, it is notable that nearly one-third of postgraduate registrations throughout the University are part-time and that the average Certificate student is working to a standard generally indistinguishable from that of a second-year undergraduate. It seems clear that so considerable a part of the University community should not be left to fend for itself in library matters, but very little action was taken to increase the availability of library materials to part-time students before the academic year 1971/72. Part-time postgraduates and Certificate students already enjoyed precisely the same rights in the Library as their full-time fellows, but little effort was available to discover whether they had access to the same facilities in practice. Students on updating or leisure courses were even worse off in library terms, being served only by the Extra-Mural Collection of about 1,200 text-books, administered by the (then) Extra-Mural Department (now the Department of Adult Education). These were originally issued in book-boxes to the extra-mural classes run in whole or part by the Department, but by 1972 the collection had no librarian and the system had become moribund. It was decided to transfer the stock to the Main University Library, which would undertake the provision of book-boxes in future. At the time of writing some 14 book-boxes are provided officially to a variety of centres, and certain other less formal arrangements have come into being. Even where the 'leisure interest' classes are concerned, however, the situation can hardly be described as satisfactory; one suspects that the book-box system, suggestive as it is of 'packaged learning' rather than of free enquiry, is repugnant in itself to librarians in higher education - it is certainly impossible for a restricted number of library staff to provide it at anything like an academic level to so large a number of students, based, in many cases, so far from the University.

2 PILOT STUDY OF LIBRARY NEEDS OF CERTIFICATE STUDENTS: BACKGROUND

The library difficulties experienced by part-time students whose courses were on-campus might perhaps seem to be less acute, but they were certainly considerable.

The problems were brought to the notice of present Reader Services staff, in August 1976, by a request from the Adult Education Department to update its book-list for the Environmental Science Certificate course.

Difficulties were exacerbated in this case by interdisciplinarity; divisional librarians were expert in the literature of specific traditional subject areas, but none could be identified as having a particular responsibility for environmental science. Material relating to the subject was scattered not merely throughout the classificatons in both Main and Medical Libraries, but was also represented in smaller departmental collections, notably in Geography, Geology and Oceanography. Most of those closed, or at the very least did not provide a loan service, at those very times most convenient for part-time students to visit them. The students seemed, indeed, uncertain whether they had any right to do so, and some actually enquired whether they were allowed in the Main Library during the day-time. This tacit acceptance of 'second-class citizen' status by the part-time students must bear some part of the blame for the long-term neglect of their peculiar library problems.

3 PILOT STUDY: METHODOLOGY

Against this background a small group was set up early in 1978, comprising Jo Bossanyi (one of the course co-ordinators) from Adult Education, Bill Fleming from Teaching Media, and Joan Marder, Mary Miller and Elizabeth Corney from the Library. The four last attended one of first-year lectures to discuss library problems with the students, and subsequently the Library took the following actions in collaboration with Teaching Media:-

3.1 The three librarians returned to the campus at 9.00 p.m. to take the 58 students on a conducted tour of the Main Library.

3.2 An exhibition on the literature of Waste Disposal was used to illustrate the scattering of the subject throughout traditional disciplines.

3.3 The Library applied for (and failed to gain) a grant of £2,000 from the Nuffield Foundation to pursue the investigation in depth; it was then decided to continue as far as possible using the resources available.

3.4 Bill Fleming and Elizabeth Corney attended separate seminars of the 2nd year course and continued discussion of library problems with the students. They held structured interviews with 50% of the students either in person or over the telephone, and followed these up with the course co-ordinators (Jo Bossanyi and Eric Kay).

3.5 Guides to the Perkins Agricultural Library and to Indexing and Abstracting Journals on Level 3 of the Main Library with special reference to environmental science, were prepared respectively by Geoffrey Hampson and Raymond Turley.

3.6 Guides giving the names of divisional librarians most likely to be expert (a) in specific areas of environmental science (b) in subjects for discussion at particular seminars included in the course, and the evenings and Saturdays on which these librarians would be available in the Main or Wessex Medical Libraries were prepared by Elizabeth Corney. The opportunity to identify such members of the library staff seemed to be particularly appreciated.

3.7 A book-box containing material relating to the Swansea area was prepared by Pat Manson for the field study weekend in that area.

3.8 Details of seminar subjects were passed to Elizabeth Corney, who circulated subject divisional librarians asking for information on relevant materials in their specific areas. It had been intended to produce a printed guide based on the resulting lists, but pressure of other work did not allow it. The lists were held at the Issue Counter and used by the senior member of staff on evening or Saturday duty to advise environmental science students who asked for help.

3.9 A special arrangement was made with the Geography Library, to send over to the Main Library materials reserved by these students which they were unable to collect during the Geography Library's opening hours.

3.10 The requirement for a tutor's signature on inter-library loan application from undergraduates was waived in the cases of Certificate Students.

3.11 A "Mini-Library" to demonstrate the organisation of the Library, shelving arrangements and techniques of searching the library catalogues and the reference works in its stock was embarked on (using mock books made from cigarette packets).

3.12 Information on new publications in environmental science received in the Library was passed on to Jo Bossanyi.

3.13 A catalogue of recent works on environmental science was begun.

3.14 A Working Group on Library Facilities for Part-time Students was set up and held its first meeting in March 1979.

4 THE PILOT STUDY: FINDINGS

Having reached this point, the investigation was overtaken by the cuts in finance which have so far made it impossible to resume. The Main Library's reduction in service hours inconvenienced part-time students more than other types of user, and the inability of the investigators to continue unfortunately coincided with the third year of the Certificate Course, when library use would normally be at its most intensive. However, the following points had emerged very clearly.

4.1 The backgrounds of the 58 students who started the course were extremely varied; a fair proportion were housewives, and were following the course purely for interest; most, however, were business people. Of these some worked in fields related to environmental science and saw the Certificate as a useful qualification; at least two were plainly dedicated to study for its own sake, and were simultaneously following OU courses, and some, again, were pursuing the course as a leisure interest. As there was no entry qualification for the first year, it was expected that the class would be halved at its end, and this proved to be the case. Even so, the remaining 28 varied from those with experience of degree level work (and of academic library use) to the majority who had had no experience at all, before embarking on the course, of work in a large library. This meant, ironically enough, that while they had less opportunity than full-time students to obtain guidance in library use from professional staff, their need of such guidance was considerably greater.

4.2 There was a particular difficulty in the actual acquisition of materials relating to the course, owing to the multi-subject interests of Adult Education. The method of submission through a departmental library representative relevant to other departments did not appear to work in Adult Education, either because such a representative would have to be a polymath or because many tutors came in on an occasional basis and were not familiar themselves with the Library's operations or its holdings. In the case of Environmental Science, no books were recommended for acquisition by teaching staff on the Certificate course; the students relied on those bought on the initiative of other departments. Some relevant works had been included in book-boxes for the use of non-certificate Adult Education students, thereby reducing their availability to those on the more advanced course.

4.3 Normal arrangements for the fairer distribution of books in demand (such as the Short Loan Collection) were of no use to these students. A one-week turn-round of library material was the minimum acceptable.

4.4 Access to the various libraries, or at least to their services, was the basic problem. Even if they were able to do so, they were understandably reluctant to spend time in commuting between Main and Divisional Libraries.

4.5 The impersonality of a large academic library was alien to most of them, and they preferred, if possible, to use the smaller resources of their firm and public libraries. This attitude altered noticeably when they were able to identify specific members of the University Library Staff.

4.6 They were less familiar than younger students with audiovisual teaching methods and were somewhat dismayed at the prospect of tape-slide programmes and the actuality of microfiche catalogues.

5 SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENTS: CAMPUS ATTITUDES

Since the demise of the project the declared interest in continuing education has (ironically enough) increased. The Working Party on Academic Goals (University of Southampton 1980) has emphasized the growing importance of part-time courses:-

> "It must... be reckoned very likely that we shall find convincing reasons for switching resources from one area to another, supporting more continuing and less full-time education, and taking more part-time and fewer full-time students. As the proportion of older age groups in the population tends to rise towards the end of this decade, social pressure is likely to push in that direction whatever we plan to do. We should be prepared."

Unfortunately this realization does not always seem to be accompanied by the perception that part-time study has certain peculiar resource (or specifically library) implications (in effect, one may suspect that it is thought to be a cheap alternative to full-time). However, Southampton University actually set up a Working Party on Continuing Education in 1979, and this body has recently recognised the library implications and drawn the attention of Senate to them. The University's Board for Collegiate Studies also appointed a Library Provision Panel, comprising three senior members of the Library Staff, expressly to investigate the library support available in collegiate institutions applying for university validation of their courses. It should not be supposed that part-time students working on courses actually provided by the University would expect less in the way of guaranteed library provision than their collegiate fellows.

In December 1980 most of these points were made to the Departmental Library Representatives' Meeting, which received sympathetically the following recommendations.

5.1 The University should determine what proportion of its resources should be devoted to full-time and what to part-time education, and should expect the Library to develop its facilities accordingly. If provision for part-time students were to be extended, the necessary resources would need to be made available to the Library, or the University would have to consider which of the services for full-time students and staff should be discontinued.

5.2 If any priority were to be given to the development of part-time courses, it would be desirable to make resources available to the Library for the immediate resumption of its investigation into the Library implications of such courses. The possibility of collaboration with public and other libraries within the region should be included in the investigation.

5.3 All new courses, especially part-time ones involving 'distance teaching', should be fully discussed with the Librarian or his representative before being set up, if appropriate library support were to be ensured.

5.4 In accordace with the recommendation of the Working Party on Academic Goals (University of Southampton 1980) that "all academic activities should be developed with major attention to their possible contribution to continuing education and all departments should give a member of the academic staff responsibility for pursuing this activity," it would be desirable that a member of the academic Library staff should be similarly designated, in order to investigate and co-ordinate facilities for part-time students.

5.5 It would be helpful if the Librarian or his representative served on any bodies set up to further the development of continuing education within the University, such as those recommended by the Working Party for Continuing Education. (University of Southampton 1979)

None of those recommendations has so far been taken up by the University.

6 SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENTS: LIBRARY FACILITIES

The small gains made in terms of library service to part-time students in the course of the project fell early victims of the financial cuts; access is now even more restricted by a reduction in opening and service hours, and staff time has not been available to provide the type of printed guide which was specifically designed for those students whose time on campus was limited. The Mini-Library remained at a stage in which its only perceived usefulness lay in the demonstration of shelf-order, and the catalogue of recent publications in environmental science became moribund. However, a new awareness of the problem had been developed among Library and Adult Education staff and the new restrictions on service hours in themselves produced a new emphasis on guiding the Library in a manner which would make all students, whether full-time or part-time, less dependent on a personal appeal to library staff. One result of this in the Main Library was a self-guided tour in the general services and science areas, another the introduction of a crude self-issue system for mature students, of proven responsibility, with library access difficulties. The Library was fortunate in 1982 in obtaining a grant under the Community Enterprise programme, for six members of staff to look into the feasibility of further methods of easing such problems and encouraging the exploitation of its facilities, and this project incorporated some continuation of our original investigation of the particular needs of part-time students. From April 1983 the investigation will be taken over for a further year by three more staff members under the auspices of the Community Programme, and it is hoped to produce a full report of its conclusions in the Summer of 1984.

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PART-TIME STUDENTS AND ULSTER POLYTECHNIC LIBRARY

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A study of part-time students and Ulster Polytechnic library was carried out in 1978. A large proportion (30%) of respondents to a questionnaire had never visited the Polytechnic library. Almost 40% said they would use the library more if its hours of opening were extended. The demands of the course and to a lesser extent the students attendance pattern seemed to affect library use. Few had received instruction in library use. Since the study the opening hours have been extended, a part-time student collection of basic texts has been started and more instruction classes for part-time students have been arranged to try and enable part-time students to make better use of the Polytechnic library.

This paper is a review of a study carried out at Ulster Polytechnic which attempted to investigate the use made of the library by the part-time students. Part-time students are a large proportion of the student population of Ulster Polytechnic. In this academic year there are 3,460 out of a total enrolment of 7,952. Many polytechnics have a majority of part-time students. Eric Robinson has suggested "The academic range of the polytechnic should clearly be determined by the needs of part-time students rather than those of full-time students, for the part-time students have nowhere else to go" (Robinson 1968). While not everyone would go as far as this, few would deny that part-time students have a claim for special attention and not only because of their number.

The abundance of part-time students was not the main reason for the study. There were other more immediate reasons, chief among them being complaints from part-time students about the library service and their complaints were supported by teaching staff. The fact that spot checks on the issue records showed that at any one time significantly fewer part-time students had books on loan than full-time students on similar courses. The difference appeared to support the complaint that part-time students were at a disadvantage. The first student intake at Ulster Polytechnic was in 1971. The main library at Jordanstown started virtually from scratch. There were branch libraries at College of Art and Design and the College of Domestic Science. The latter moved to the main campus in 1976 and the book stock integrated with the main collection. The library has occupied its present building since 1974 and at the time of the study there were some 130,000 volumes in the library and subscriptions to 2,300 periodicals. The hours of opening were 9.00 a.m. to 9.00 p.m. Monday to Thursday, 9.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. on Friday and 10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. on Saturday.

The study was based on a questionnaire to be completed by the students. The information sought concerned -

a. When, if ever, the student visited the library
b. His attitude to the library's opening hours
c. What he did on his visits to the library
d. Failure to find required books
e. Whether he had received instruction in the use of the library
f. Which other libraires he used
g. How many books he bought for course reading.

Students were not identified but each stated his course, year of study and pattern of attendance.

Rather than post a questionnaire form to a random sample of part-time students at the Polytechnic we decided to distribute forms in class. This was for reasons of economy and concern that there might have been a poor response to a posted questionnaire. As it would have been impossible to visit classes throughout the Polytechnic we decided instead to contact as many as possible of the total number of students in one faculty. The Faculty of Business Administration was chosen because it was the faculty with the most part-time students and showed the most concern with the problems of their part-time students. We were granted permission to interrupt classes during one week in the Spring term to have students complete questionnaires. Forms were distributed to a total of 351 students and after a brief explanation completed forms were collected on the spot. No one refused to co-operate.

The questionnaires were analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences under broad headings.

1. General

This was a straightforward exercise counting the responses to the various questions. It suggested several other ways in which the data should be studied. The most distressing result was that by just before the Easter break of at least their first year at the Polytechnic over 30% had never visited the Polytechnic library. From the start it had been suspected that some part-time students did not use the Polytechnic library so questions were included to try and establish if use of other libraries or purchase of books could be related to non-use. That 67% of respondents used other libraries was to be expected but it was a shock to discover that 65% of those who had never visited the Polytechnic library used other libraries for course related material.

The Polytechnic's rather isolated position, some seven miles outside Belfast, makes it not surprising that few (6.9%) visited the library on days when they did not have classes. This emphasised the importance of matching the library's opening hours to the class-times of the students.

Another surprise was that the percentage of library users who failed to borrow the books they required was no higher than 59%. The most common reason for failure was, predictably, that the book was not on the shelves. Only 21.4% failed because the book was in the counter reserve collection. This may indicate that only a small number of books relating to their course are in the collection or, more likely, that many of the students were unaware of the existence of the counter reserve collection. The question relating to instruction supported this idea. Only 12% had received instruction and comments indicated that this had been part of an earlier full-time course at the Polytechnic. Some suggested that they would benefit from another class in library use as there had been many changes since they had completed their previous course.

2. Type of course

Students were on degree, HNC or professional courses. Clearly the demands of a course can influence the use a student makes of the library. There was a marked difference between students on degree courses and the others (See Table 1). There were few degree students who had never used the libary and they had used more of the services than HNC or professional course students. The degree students indicated they would be most likely to use the library more if its hours of opening were extended. There was an indication that those who used the library most were most anxious to use it even more.

The degree students reported a high incidence of failure to borrow a book. This was at first surprising given that there was reason to believe that they were the heaviest and most efficient users of the library, but it seems fair to assume that the more often a student has tried to borrow the more likely he is to have a had a failure. More degree students reported failure due to the book being on counter reserve which must indicate their greater awareness of that collection.

There were four attendance patterns. Daytime only, day and evening, evening only and block release. All the block release students were on professional courses which made it difficult to speculate on the significance of block release. Similarly all evening only students were on degree courses.

Since pattern of attendance depends on course it was difficult to form any conclusions about how pattern of attendance was related to when the students visited the library and what they did in the library. The only general point to emerge was that "evening only" students were by far the most anxious for extended opening. It was necessary to compare students on the same course with different patterns of attendance. The only comparison that could be made was for degree students who attended evening only or day and evening. There was a significant difference in the use they made of services, in particular, counter reserve, periodicals and study facilities were less used by evening only students than by those attending day and evening. These services require the student to remain in the library for some time.

When we were designing the questionnaire a question was included to establish the year of study of each student. Unfortunately there was great confusion over this question with students in one class giving a wide variety of answers and almost 10% gave no answer at all. Needs and therefore use may well change from year to year but it was not possible to make use of the answers given.

3. Non users

The highest percentage of non-users (56%) were on professional courses and non-use seemed to be due largely to the nature of the course. Even when allowance was made for the block release students the percentage of non-users on professional courses only fell to 49%. All block release students were on professional courses. Block release students appeared to feel that there was little point in involving themselves with the Polytechnic library since they would be away from the Polytechnic for long periods during their course.

Approximately 10% of the students had not used any library for their course reading. The opening hours of the Polytechnic library did not appear to be a major barrier among those who never visited the library. Approximately 80% said they would not use the library even if the hours were extended but the fact that the other 20% would be more likely to use the library if the hours were extended was significant.

The book buying habits of users and non-users were similar. There was no evidence that a major reason for students not using the library was their reliance on books they had bought.

4. Instruction

Only 12.3% of the respondents had received instruction in library use so any difference between them and their colleagues who had not been instructed may not be significant. However, those who had received instruction were more likely to have made use of all the library's facilities.

CONCLUSIONS AND CHANGES

The survey showed that there was cause for concern and the library's services should be re-examined to try and make it easier for part-time students to use the library. As there was no control group of full-time students it was impossible to tell if the problems of part-time students were unique to them as a group.

Some of the main factors studied are beyond the control of the library. These are:-

The amount of time the part-time student has available for study

In the survey "People in Polytechnics" (Whitburn, Mealing and Cox 1976) lack of time was given as by far the most important reason for part-time students not using polytechnic facilities. While we did not ask the students why they had not used the library more it can be assumed that heavy work and family commitments are an important factor.

The demands for reading of the course

The view that if the course demands that students use the library then they will do so. This was reinforced by lecturers teaching on the professional courses who indicated that they expected their students to buy two or three key texts and work from them. It is generally accepted that degree courses should demand evidence of wider reading.

Pattern of attendance

While pattern of attendance was not as significant as type of course it does present problems, particularly in terms of time for evening only students whose timetable was quite full. Block release presents a special set of problems.

The location of the Polytechnic

The location of the Polytechnic almost certainly contributes to the fact that only 10% of students had used the library on days when they had no classes. In the article "Library service to part-time students" (Orton and Wiseman, 1977) the authors describe, in their study of two Canadian Universities, how the distance part-time students lived from their university library was related to the use they made of the library.

While these factors are important the library should re-examine its services to see how they can be better related to the needs of the users. Since this study was carried out several changes specifically aimed at helping part-time students have been made.

Opening hours were extended until 10.00 p.m. Monday-Thursday. Since part-time classes end no later than 9.00 p.m. there is now some chance for part-time students to visit the library after class. While no attempt has been made to measure the use made of the extra hours, part-time students frequently arrive at the library after 9.00 p.m. which would have been impossible before.

It may well be the case that if a student wants or needs to use the library then he will find out for himself how it works by trial and error or by asking for help. The few who had received instruction in the use of the library seemed to have found it useful and there is little doubt that efficient library use can save a student a great deal of time.

Since the study a greater effort has been made to provide instruction classes in the use of the library for part-time students.

Course tutors are encouraged to arrange for their part-time students to attend instruction classes. They are told that library staff are available to give classes any time that the library is open and in the classes it is stressed to part-time students that the library is there to meet their needs just as much as the full-time students and that steps have been taken to try and lessen their special difficulties.

A collection of books for part-time students has been started. It contains multiple copies of many of the recommended texts for business and management courses and they are available for loan for a period of one week. The use of this collection has been very disappointing. Initially it was felt that the students did not know of its existence.

When the collection had been established for two years the issue records showed that of the 326 volumes, 76% had never been borrowed and that there had been only 53 students borrowers. Many of the titles in the collection are in constant demand by full-time students. It was felt that it was difficult to justify having so many books that would be heavily used if transferred to the open shelves, tied up in a little used collection. However, the collection is still there. Its use is still low and as no further analysis of the loan records has been undertaken it is difficult to say if its use has improved. It has been established now for three years and is explained in the instruction classes so that it is now unlikely that students do not know the collection is available.

Over 50% of the students used other libraries, particularly public libraries, for course material. While it is the responsibility of the Polytechnic library to provide books for the students it may be helpful to send copies of reading lists to the public libraries so that they would know what books are likely to be requested. What, if anything, was done about it would be decided by the public library.

Simple things such as good sign posting, clear instructions on how to use catalogues or pieces of equipment are of benefit to all users. Library staff should help the lecturers in the preparation of reading lists. Even the addition of class numbers would be of great benefit to the students. Since the study was carried out there has been an increased awareness of the needs of the part-time students. In the evenings when the library runs with fewer staff if there is not one of the subject specialists from the required area available it is possible to ask a full-time student to ask for someone next morning who would be better equipped to deal with his query. Part-time students cannot call again for perhaps another week so that a greater effort is made to satisfy their query there and then.

The library staff and staff teaching on part-time courses should discuss the possibility of producing readings similar to the course units produced so well by the Open University. These would be of particular value to part-time stduents who are taking their course at an Outcentre rather than on the main campus. The Polytechnic mounts a few of its courses for part-time students at centres roughly 60 miles away.

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TABLE 1

COMPARISON OF STUDENTS ON HIGHER NATIONAL CERTIFICATE, DEGREE AND PROFESSIONAL COURSES

	HNC		Degree		Professional	
	No.	(%)	No.	(%)	No.	(%)
Students who had						
- visited the library	119	(80)	74	(97)	54	(43)
- used counter reserve	16	(13)	28	(39)	8	(14)
- Consulted periodicals	48	(40)	49	(66)	26	(48)
- used the author catalogue	51	(43)	56	(76)	24	(45)
- used the subject catalogue	55	(46)	48	(65)	21	(39)
- studied for some time	92	(77)	60	(81)	36	(68)
- borrowed books	81	(68)	68	(92)	34	(63)

LIBRARY BARRIERS FACING THE PART-TIME POSTGRADUATE STUDENT: REVELATIONS OF A READING LIST

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Following complaints from students on the new part-time postgraduate degree course in Politics and History at Coventry (Lanchester) Polytechnic, a Working Party studied the pattern of demand and availability of items on one of the reading lists for the course. The results revealed many problems: insufficient copies, items not in stock, items confined to the Short Loan Collection and therefore inaccessible to part-time students, and heavy competition from full-time students on other courses. Recommendations made by the Working Party to alleviate these difficulties included closer co-operation in the compilation of reading lists, heavier duplication of key titles, more publicity of library services aimed specifically towards part-time students, and greater use of loan policies which aid rather than hinder part-time students.

1 INTRODUCTION

"Probably the most pressing need in 1980, which, it must be hoped, becomes a major concern of academic librarianship long before 1990 is the question of much improved delivery of academic library service to part-time students in all their forms ... All kinds of social and economic imperatives indicate that the incidence of part-time students - especially perhaps postgraduate students - will increase dramatically ... Short Loan collections are an anathema to part-time students. Weekend opening appeals little to the home-based student travelling 20 miles or more each weekday. Part-time students are, typically, more mature, more articulate, more independent minded and certainly more aware of their problems and handicaps in securing an education than are full-time students. They can be formidable critics of a traditionally delivered library service" (Davinson, 1980).

Don Davinson's thought-provoking comments in the first UCR Newsletter deserve lengthy quotation, because they highlight some of the major difficulties part-time students face, and the challenge which these pose to academic librarians. Part-time students have in the past tended to be something of a "submerged minority" in many academic institutions, but this picture is likely to change substantially during the coming years, as the number of eighteen-year-olds available for full-time higher education takes a nose-dive. Although present government policies towards higher education might seem to make any forecasting even more hazardous than usual, the debate following the D.E.S. document "Education in the 1990s" indicated that universities as well as polytechnics were looking to recruit more students onto part-time courses. At Coventry (Lanchester) Polytechnic, the ratio of part-time to full-time students is lower than the average for polytechnics, but in 1980 every new course being planned in the Social Sciences Faculty was part-time.

How should we face up to the challenge of the part-time student, and how can we make his or her lot somewhat less difficult? For difficult it certainly is. Evening students in particular have a very hard time of it. Having worked a full day, they then face a two or three hour session of lectures, seminars and tutorials, often twice a week, for two, three, four or even five years. In between, they must try and set aside several hours each week for studying and writing up essays and projects. It is hardly surprising in the circumstances that Russell and Lyttle found that 30.5% of the part-time students they surveyed had never visited the library (Russell and Lyttle 1979), that 35% of Sheffield Polytechnic part-time students had not joined the library in 1981 (Williams 1981) or that "lack of time" was cited by well over half of the non-users of the City of London Polytechnic libraries (Pritchard and Payne 1980). Given the tremendous problem of time pressure and concomitant fatigue suffered by part-time students, it is clearly vital that very positive steps are taken to minimise their other handicaps. One such handicap, as our investigation at Coventry (Lanchester) Polytechnic showed, is the "traditionally delivered library service" to which Davinson refers.

2 BACKGROUND

Before describing the nature and results of that investigation, and the events which led to it, some background information on the Coventry (Lanchester) Polytechnic and its library service is necessary. Currently there are 5,235 "full-time equivalent" students at the Polytechnic; in actual numbers terms, this comprises 5,032 full-time students and 1,303 part-time students. Academic staff total 521, and library staff 49. Ninety per cent of courses, which cover Art and Design, Science, Engineering, Social Sciences and Business, are at degree or postgraduate level. The library staff structure was re-organised along subject lines in 1978. Total stock for the two libraries (Main Library and Art and Design Library) is approximately 200,000 volumes. To cope with the heavy demand placed upon the library stock by social science students in particular, we resorted many years ago, in common with most academic libraries, to the creation of a Short Loan Collection. Items are lent from this closed-access collection during the day, overnight and at weekends, and because of the tight control we are able to exercise over this form of loan, other "semi-reference" classes of material are lent under similar rules from the same issue point, e.g. periodicals. Otherwise 'normal' loan rules permit undergraduates to borrow a maximum of 7 items for three weeks, postgraduates to have up to 12 items, which are due for return three times per year, and staff up to 20 items with the same three return dates. However, any items can be recalled after one week loan when reserved by another reader.

For some years it had been my intention to introduce a Seven Day Loan category, to bridge the gap between Short Loan and normal loan. Like Short Loan, the rules would apply to all readers, but the books would be on the open shelves. Since all Polytechnic classes take place at least once a week, the new system would have the specific intention of assisting part-time students. A Seven Day Loan system was not practical until after the implementation of the automated issue system in 1978, and it was only introduced in a small, experimental way in 1979. In 1980, having concluded that its general introduction would not after all swamp the Issue Desk staff, we publicised it widely amongst the academic staff and invited their co-operation in identifying stock to be designated Seven Day Loan. It was anticipated that where multiple copies of particular titles existed, there might well be copies on Short Loan, Seven Day Loan and Normal Loan. Since late 1980, there has been a steady build-up of titles transferred to Seven Day Loan, culminating in a major exercise in the summer of 1981 when about 1,500 titles were made Seven Day Loan.

Against this background, the Department of Politics and History had sought and gained approval from the CNAA to begin a part-time postgraduate MA degree in Modern Historical and Political Studies, in 1980, and its first intake of 20 students came in September of that year. It is a three year course, the first half of which is a "taught" element in which students choose a series of options, and the second half is in the form of a dissertation, "the aim of (which) is to provide the student with an opportunity for sustained work of an independent and, in some cases, original nature in an area of particular personal interest".

The Course Proposal, from which this quotation is taken, identifies the 'target clientele' for the course as teachers and lecturers, local government and other administrative employees (within which, interestingly enough, 'senior librarians' are amongst those for whom it is claimed the degree would also lead to career development) and 'general interest'. Bearing in mind Davinson's comments, the concluding paragraph within this third category makes illuminating reading: "Our view of the 1980s sees this demand rising as a result of fewer opportunities for full-time postgraduate courses, and the forecast decrease in the length of the working week".

It was obviously important that the Subject librarian (Politics and History) should make contact with the students at the very beginning, which he duly did. During the course of a two hour session, he emphasised that the library staff were motivated to help all our readers but particularly part-time students, with their special problems. However, he stressed that we could not relax the Short Loan Rules. His clear message to the students, nevertheless, was to contact him as soon as they experienced any problems in using the library service.

After little more than a term, it became clear that the students were indeed having problems. They crystallised with the Director of Studies remarking to me informally in the library in early February 1981 that the students were complaining bitterly about problems of access to library materials. He wanted their difficulties to be tackled urgently, not least because a CNAA Visiting Party was due at the Polytechnic in April to review the progress of the course. A meeting was therefore held in the library of all the interested parties during the following week. It consisted of the Head of the Politics and History Department, the Director of Studies and a student representative of the course from the teaching side, and the Faculty Librarian, Subject Librarian, Issue Desk Superintendent and myself from the Library side.

The first meeting was not without its acrimonious moments. It quickly became clear that the chief cause of complaint was the Short Loan Collection, the "anathema" of Davinson's observations. The Head of Department, in particular, found our determination not to make exceptions on Short Loan rules "bureaucratic", and expressed his intention of raising the question at the forthcoming meeting of the Library Committee, and even at Academic Board level. Having occasionally tried bending the rules for deserving cases in the past, and having brought down the righteous wrath of other readers upon our heads, we refused to compromise. We stressed the merits of the Seven Day Loan system as an alternative, and found that there was only a dim awareness of its existence, despite our efforts in publicising it to the academic staff. Even so, considerable doubts were expressed that it would be an effective substitute.

At least on one issue, however, everyone at the meeting was in agreement: the extremely small amount of time available for part-time students to visit the library put them under a very severe handicap, particularly in face of the competition of full-time students. A way forward presented itself, with the agreement of the library staff present at the meeting to examine in detail one of the reading lists of the course, and report our findings. The objective would be to discover the pattern of availability of the titles on the reading list. The investigation was carried out jointly by Arthur Owens, who is Subject Librarian in Politics and History, Bridget Towler, who is our Issue Desk Superintendent, and myself.

3 THE SURVEY

At the outset, we decided to ascertain more than merely whether or not the library held a particular title. Bearing in mind the particular problems of access suffered by the student concerned, we agreed to investigate the following factors:

a) Is the title in print?

b) Is it in the library's stock?

c) If so, how many copies does the library hold?

d) What loan regulations pertain to the copies? (i.e. are they Short Loan, Seven Day Loan, normal loan).

e) Are the 'normal loan' copies (i) on the shelves? (ii) on loan? (iii) unaccounted for? at the time of the survey.

f) How heavily used are the titles on the list?

g) Who are the borrowers of the items on loan at the time of the survey?

With this level of analysis, we hoped to build up a picture of the relative patterns of demand and availability. The reading list sent by the department for us to analyse comprised the recommended reading issued by one lecturer for three different options: Utopianism; Nazism; and the Social Protest and Social Control. Thus none of the three sections of the list was comprehensive, but the total of 51 titles gave a sufficient cross-section to form a reasonably average sample. The catalogue check, shelf check, Short Loan check, Issue check and Books in Print check were then made.

The main results are set out below. Figures 1-2 at the end of this paper highlight the main features, which showed that:

i) Only 23 titles (45%) were on the shelves

ii) 13 titles were available on Short Loan only.

iii) 5 titles were not in stock.

iv) 13 titles, comprising a total of 25 copies, were on loan. Of these, only 4 were borrowed by MA students; the remainder were split between BA Modern Language students (11), BA Modern Studies (7), BA Applied Social Studies students (2) and a Diploma in Management Studies student.

v) None of the 51 items was designated Seven Day Loan. In contrast, 28 titles were available on Short Loan.

vi) There appeared to be little correlation between the pattern of demand for particular titles, and the number of copies the library possessed. At one extreme, multiple copies existed of the 5 titles on Utopianism, all very little used; whilst at the other extreme, there were several examples of single copies held only on the Short Loan Collection, and borrowed 30, 40 and even up to 70 times within one year. These items were in almost every case still in print and available at small cost.

vii) Where the level of duplication did reflect high demand, this did not necessarily lead to greater availability. None of the nine copies of Bullock, A.: Hitler was on the open shelves at the time of survey: 7 were on loan, 1 was on the Short Loan Collection and 1 copy was missing.

viii) In contrast, of the 13 titles which were uniquely on the Short Loan Collection, more than half, 7, were not earning their keep, having been lent 5 times or less within the previous year. One title had not been lent at all.

ix) The items on loan at the time of the survey (25 copies of 13 titles) were for the most part very heavily used. The average number of loans per copy was 10 within the previous 12 months, with a peak of 17. The average for the 7 copies of Bullock was 15.

4 CONCLUSIONS

It was clear from the survey that the part-time students on the postgraduate MA course were quite justified in arguing that they were being deprived of reasonable access to the reading materials they needed. The powerful combination of factors of too few copies of essential titles, too many titles only available from Short Loan, heavy competition from rival full-time courses, and finally, no use made of the Seven Day Loan system, was effectively blocking them from more than half of the items on their reading list - probably the most important half, at that. It was a dismal picture, particularly when set in the context of their known problem of lack of time.

On the positive side, however, there was much that could be done to alleviate the difficulties. Our proposals included:

a) Heavier duplication of key titles

There appeared to have been a supposition, when the Reading list was compiled, that if the library stocked a copy of an item, this was sufficient. The survey showed how badly wrong this view was. However, many of the titles were found to be in print, at comparatively low cost. For slightly more than £200, adequate numbers of essential titles could be bought quite quickly. Because of the Short Loan problem, this would mean in many instances the titles being available to MA students for the first time. (One particular title, Bracher: The German dictatorship had been lent a total of 70 times from Short Loan, but was listed in British Books in Print. Our urgent order for more copies remained unsatisfied for several months however, before we finally managed to grab some from the shelves of the local bookshop.

b) Use of the Seven Day Loan system

We recommended that some copies at present on Short Loan should be made temporarily or permanently Seven Day Loan, and that some of the extra copies should be treated similarly. The rapid circulation of such titles is re-inforced by heavier fines and no renewal, though reservations are possible. The net result is that availability is much greater.

c) Closer co-operation between lecturing staff and subject librarians before reading lists are issued

We pointed out the absurdity of issuing a reading list which contained 18 items which were "unavailable" - 13 because of the Short Loan Collection, and 5 which were not in stock. There were other problems concerned with the list - wrong class numbers (much worse than omitting them in the first place) and even incorrect titles.

d) Better communication internally between subject librarians and Short Loan staff

This recommendation was made in order to point out the need to notify subject staff of material in heavy demand, and to remove material not earning its keep. This is, unfortunately, the kind of task which tends to be left to the Summer vacations, because of the heavy day-to-day pressure at the Short Loan counter - by which time, it is too late to have helped solve any existing difficulties.

e) "Wants" list

We suggested that a more active policy should be pursued concerning out-of-print items which were worthy of inclusion on reading lists, to the extent of seeking the permission of publishers to photocopy items if there were no likelihood of reprinting and little possibility of obtaining them second-hand.

f) More publicity/library instruction for part-time students

We were forcibly struck during the survey by how little use was made of the reservation system by students on the course. Considering how little chance, statistically, part-time students have of finding what they need on the shelves compared with their full-time student colleagues, the reservation system ought to be doubly valuable to them. We felt that a follow-up session with the Subject Librarian, and a brief, pithy document aimed directly at part-time students would help.

The report was duly circulated to the members of the original meeting, and a second meeting convened, soon after Easter. This proved to be a very much more productive meeting than the first, with additional recommendations being added to our own list. One suggestion made, and since acted upon, was the introduction of a "post-box" for out-of-hours returns, so that at least those students on the course who are lucky enough to live in or near Coventry could borrow items on Short Loan on a Saturday morning and return them on Sunday evening or Monday morning on the way to work. Our Issue Desk Supervisor, Bridget Towler, volunteered to phone part-time students when reserved items they had requested were returned. And it emerged that since the course exams took place in September, some titles uniquely in the Short Loan Collection could be made Seven Day Loan for the duration of the Summer Vacation.

What then, is the situation one year on? There is little doubt that at least so far as the Reading List we examined is concerned, access for the MA students has improved. The Seven Day Loan system has been extended to many hundreds more titles, heavily publicised, and is working well. Some Short Loan titles were indeed temporarily transferred during the Summer Vacation to Seven Day Loan, and were used.

The "brief, pithy document" made its appearance in October, as did the post-box. And yet, the nagging doubts remain. In the first place, our investigation covered books only; periodicals were not listed, and not considered. How often students are able to obtain photocopies of articles they require, how often they use the inter-library loan system, and with what success, how they cope with other material which may be vital to them but confined to the library, we do not know. In the latter category, mention perhaps especially needs making of two examples. The first concerns the library's set of The Irish Universities Press reprint of Nineteenth Century Parliamentary Papers. Beautifully bound in 1,000 large folio volumes, and costing around £20,000, this set occupies an honoured place on the library shelves. It is given special mention in the 'Library Resources' section of the Course Proposal and emphasised in the preamble to the Social Protest and Social Control in Britain 1820-1870 option: "Students will be expected to consult some primary source material, especially relevant Parliamentary Papers". But the set is a reference one. It has never occurred to us that it should be otherwise, and no member of the Politics and History Department has suggested it. The second example is perhaps even more telling. The library's large collection of microfilm is extrolled in the Course Proposal, as including "loan runs of the Times, the Guardian and Sunday Times, British Labour Party ephemera, British Parliamentary Papers 1922-1972..." etc. etc. How many part-time students have their own microfilm reader? Would we lend the material if they had?

Roy Williams points to other problems (Williams 1981). At Sheffield Polytechnic, a Part-time Loan Collection was established several years ago - an approach that we at Coventry have so far avoided, but may yet turn to - but appears not to be used to the extent they expected. Yet teaching staff at Sheffield continue to demand that the library pays more attention to the needs of part-time students. Part of the solution may well lie in the academic staff's own hands, when planning courses - they rarely if ever appear to consider the possibility of allocating 'library study/access time' within the period that the student is in college. Is this unrealistic? Certainly the opposite extreme, which actually happened at Coventry (Lanchester) Polytechnic, can be infuriating: a part-time MSc course in engineering runs from 9.00 a.m. - 9.00 p.m. on Fridays and from 9.00 a.m. - 12 noon on Saturdays, which exactly corresponded with the entire library opening hours on those days. As a direct result, we have since moved the Saturday morning opening hours to 10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m., so that the students can, if they have a mind to, rush over and use the library for a precious three quarters of an hour. Some prior consultation at the course planning stage might have avoided the absurd situation arising in the first place, however.

Is extending the library opening hours the answer? As Davinson points out, weekend opening hours are of little appeal to the student who lives 20 miles away, but in any case, the struggle to keep the library services going at their present level, amidst staffing cuts, is hugely difficult at times, let alone trying to stretch them further.

When all is said and done, one feels that such measures are only chipping at the edges of the problem of providing the kind of library and information service that the part-time student really needs. Eventually we must face the requirements of delivering much of his information needs directly into his home. The microprocessor, the videodisc and videotext are beginning to show us the way, and in Information Technology Year it is appropriate that we should start to examine the possibilities. By 1990 we may have the solutions.

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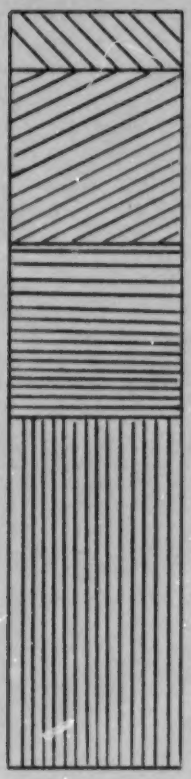


5 titles not in stock

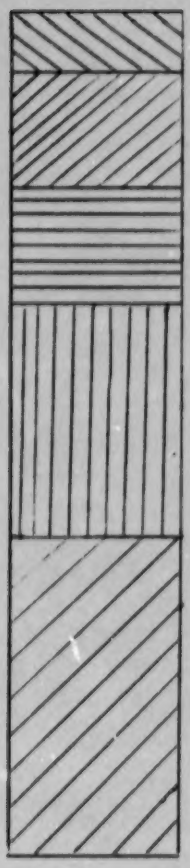
13 titles available on Short Loan Collection only

13 titles on loan

23 titles on shelves

FIGURE 1 DISTRIBUTION OF AVAILABILITY OF TITLES

NB Quantity adds up to 54 since of the thirteen titles on loan, in 3 cases one copy was also available on the shelves.



1 loan to Management Studies student

2 loans to BA Applied Social Studies students

4 loans to MA Modern and Historical and Political Studies students

7 loans to BA Modern Studies students

11 loans to BA Modern Languages students

FIGURE 2 BOOKS ON LOAN, (23 copies of a total of 13 titles), showing distribution by course

DETERMINANTS OF LIBRARY USE BY PART-TIME STUDENTS IN POLYTECHNICS

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Part-time students in polytechnics are a large and heterogeneous group of potential users of library services. Their numbers and their range are likely to grow. Drawing on the findings of two studies conducted at City of London Polytechnic, this paper identifies and describes some of the factors which seem to influence library use by part-time students. There is a need to know more about how these different factors interrelate and what their effects are on levels and patterns of use of libraries. Future research should look at how library resources can be developed and organised to meet the needs of different (but probably overlapping) groups of part-time students within polytechnic communities. Some suggestions are made for possible research by individual polytechnic libraries.

1 PART-TIME STUDENTS IN POLYTECHNICS

1.1 Numbers

Part-time students represent a very large potential user group for library services within polytechnics. There was in the region of 83,000 of them studying on courses in the 30 polytechnics in England and Wales in 1980 (Department of Education and Science 1982). They represented about 40% of all polytechnic students. At City of London Polytechnic alone, we had over 9,000 enrolments on part-time courses by November 1st of the 1981/82 academic year.

1.2 Heterogeneity

Part-time students in polytechnics are not a homogeneous group. Indeed, there seems to be far more heterogeneousness amongst them than amongst full-timers. Students may be attending classes two full days each week or just one evening each week. The vast majority - 94% according to Whitburn, Mealing and Cox (1975) - are in employment. They bring with them to the polytechnic a wealth of different everyday experiences. Fifty-seven per cent of part-time students obtain day release from their employers (Department of Education and Science 1982); the remainder do not. The majority of part-timers are mature students. Over half of all part-time students are aged over 25 compared with only 18% of students on full-time and sandwich courses (Department of Education and Science 1982). Nevertheless, there are still 46% who are under 25. And then there is the very broad range of courses, stretching from non-advanced, non-vocational classes in subjects such as art, through classes preparing students for professional and vocational examinations, to part-time first and higher degrees in academic subjects. All this adds up to an amazing diversity.

1.3 Composition

Table 1 (Appendix) provides a breakdown of the numbers of part-time students studying for different types of qualifications by level and mode of attendance. It can be seen from the table that:

1.3.1 About two-thirds of part-time students are on day-time courses and only about a third are on evening only courses.

1.3.2 Over three-quarters of part-timers are on advanced courses (as defined by the DES).

1.3.3 The greatest concentration of part-time students are on daytime advanced courses leading to professional and vocational (non-degree) qualifications - over a third of part-time students, even if we exclude teacher teaching.

1.3.4 Students on part-time first degree courses represent just 10% of all part-time students in polytechnics. Students undertaking part-time postgraduate research, on higher degree courses, or on courses leading to other postgraduate qualifications, represent a similar proportion if those undertaking postgraduate teacher training are included.

1.4 Future trends

It would be very unwise to assume that the present balance of part-time students in polytechnics will remain the same indefinitely. We need to be aware that there are trends which might well lead to:

i) a greater proportion of part-time study in polytechnics

and

ii) changes in the composition of part-time student communities in polytechnics.

These trends can be summarised as follows:

1.4.1 The need for polytechnics to seek students from groups which have hitherto been under-represented in higher education. This is to offset the shortfall in young home entrants to full-time higher education resulting from the decline in age participation rate (APR).

1.4.2 An increasing demand for continuing education to update knowledge and skills, particularly as a result of the introduction of new technology.

1.4.3 Demand for part-time higher education from those who have not been able to participate in higher education before and further demand from those who have participated before. Tight (1982) identifies three new areas of demand:

a) "from educationally poorly qualified housewives and unemployed persons for 'fresh start' study opportunities on a part-time basis during the day, often leading to more formal undergraduate studies",

b) "from employed and well qualified persons for further study opportunities on undergraduate, post-graduate and post-experience courses, mainly in the evening or at other times outside normal working hours",

c) "from less well qualified and unqualified employed persons for a similar range of opportunities, prefaced by some kind of preparatory study."

1.4.4 Increasing flexibility in modes of study to overcome barriers to studying full-time or part-time on conventional courses. Innovations which we have already seen in this direction include "Flexistudy" and "Learning by Appointment".

1.4.5 A drop in student numbers on certain types of vocational and professional part-time courses through changes in employment patterns and the need for less staff through the introduction of new technology.

2 RESEARCH ON LIBRARY USE BY PART-TIME STUDENTS AT CITY OF LONDON POLYTECHNIC

2.1 Background to the research

The large number of part-time students at the Polytechnic, and the awareness that provision for part-time study was likely to grow with the expansion of continuing education opportunities, were not the only reasons for the Polytechnic Library deciding to investigate library use by part-time students. There was a suspicion that Polytechnic Library services were being largely geared towards the needs of full-time students and that part-time students were not being adequately catered for. This feeling was supported by evidence of low utilisation of the Library by part-time students which had come out of two studies of library effectiveness (Pritchard, Auckland, Castens 1973; Pritchard and Auckland 1974). In both studies, it had been found that only 11% of library visits were made by part-time students even though they represented about 70% of the student population.

2.2 Part-time students survey

A questionnaire survey covering part-time students in all departments of the Polytechnic was carried out in the Spring Term of 1979 (see Pritchard and Payne 1980). This study revealed that slightly over half of the respondents currently used the Library. It was clear that this overall figure of Polytechnic Library use actually told us very little. The response rate had not been good (only 26%) and it seemed likely that library users were over-represented amongst the respondents.

However, the more specific findings highlighted considerable variations in patterns of library usage by students in different departments and on different types of courses. This suggested, as one might have suspected, that characteristics of courses, teaching methods, types of assessment, and attitudes of lecturers are major influences on levels of library use. Furthermore, the survey's findings also suggested that individual circumstances (such as travelling time to the college, availability of other libraries, etc.) would also affect whether part-time students used the Polytechnic Library.

2.3 Follow-up study

In the light of the findings of this survey, the Library and Learning Resources (LLR) Policy and Budgetary Committee allocated £1,000 for the purchase of texts needed by part-time students in the Accountancy and Taxation Department. It also asked the Library to monitor the effects of this expenditure on library use. The follow-up study (see Payne 1981) allowed the opportunity to developing a research design which, not only examined any changes in library use as a result of purchasing additional texts, but which also permitted further investigation of the relationship between the nature of part-time courses and the use of books and libraries. Three techniques were used: (i) a questionnaire distributed to all part-time students in the Accountancy Department and, as a control group, all part-time students in the Economics and Banking Department, (ii) semi-structured interviews with part-time students aimed at examining in more detail the role of libraries in their courses, and (iii) a study of the users of the additional texts, through a very short questionnaire inserted in each of the books issued during a three week period.

3 DETERMINANTS OF LIBRARY USE

This paper draws on the findings of the two studies, which have been conducted at City of London Polytechnic, and identifies some of the factors which seem to influence library use by part-time students. Further investigation is needed to look at how these different factors inter-relate and what the relative importance of each of them is to library use. Greater understanding of these influences on library use should help us to develop a clear conception of how library resources can be best developed to meet the needs of these learners.

3.1 Subject of study

Not surprisingly, perhaps, the first user study (Pritchard and Payne 1980) revealed considerable variations in the use of the Library by part-time students in different departments. At the lower end of the usage spectrum were the Modern Languages students (12%), the Transport and Insurance students (29%), and the Economics and Banking students (30%). At the higher end were the Politics students (100%), the Metallurgy students (80%), and the Biology students (75%). The follow-up study (Payne 1981) found significant differences, between part-time students in Accountancy and part-time students in Economics and Banking in whether they had ever visited the Library. Sixty per cent of Accountancy students had visited it before compared to only 38% of Economics and Banking students. Accountancy students though visited the Library more frequently than those in Economics and Banking. There were also significant differences in patterns of use: fewer Accountancy students, than Economics and Banking students, had used the Library for studying on their last visit, and more had used it for borrowing/returning library books.

In the interviews, conducted as part of the follow-up study, some of the quantitative differences discovered through the questionnaire survey were explained. In dynamic subjects, like banking, it was important to be au fait with new developments in the field.

One student commented, for example:

> "My course is so different because you have to be really up-to-date with things in, you know, the Financial Times. And books are too out-of-date. I mean you're wasting your time".

Of-course, it is not clear from all of this to what extent the differences arise from the nature of the subject and how much from related factors (such as teaching methods employed by teachers in different subject areas).

3.2 Level of study

In both studies, a relationship was found to exist between library use and Burnham grade of course. In the first study, the relationship was complicated by a higher than expected level of library use by part-time students on art and silversmithing courses (which are classified as Burnham III/IV and Burnham IV/V). Otherwise, the level of course was strongly correlated with the use of the library, ranging from 71% usage for students on Burnham I courses (above first degree and research training) down to 29% of students on Burnham IV courses (above GCE 'O' level or Ordinary grade of the CSE or comparable level leading directly to the ONC or courses of a comparable standard). A similar finding was made in the follow-up study in relation to part-timers in accountancy and taxation and economics and banking.

3.3 Mode of attendance

At Whitburn, Mealing and Cox (1976) note "part-time students are characterized by a high degree of motivation". Clearly, however, evening only study invariably demands a higher level of motivation than even part-time day study since the pressure on one's time will be greater. Most part-timers attending classes during the day obtain paid release from their employers, although, admittedly, students on day release courses can not always depend on their employers letting them attend classes. Some of the students interviewed as part of the follow-up study pointed out that, if it was particular busy at their employer's firm, pressures might be put on them to turn up for work. However, evening only students attend classes in their own time every week.

The initial study into library use by part-time students, not surprisingly, found that evening only students were very much less likely to currently use the Library than part-time day students. Whereas 58% of day time students used it, only 39% of evening students did so. Large differences were also found in the follow-up study. Even if evening only students felt inclined to use the Library, they simply have less opportunity to do so. Most attend classes immediately after work and would not have the chance to visit the Library before the start of the class especially if they wanted to eat something beforehand. For many, the Library will then be closed when their classes finish at nine o'clock even if they felt disposed, after a day's work and evening classes, to visit it. Greater flexibility in modes of attendance through "open learning systems" (e.g. "Flexistudy", "Learning by Appointment") may lower barriers to library use of this kind.

3.4 Type of course

The amazing diversity of part-time courses in polytechnics has already been referred to. However, by far the largest group of part-time students are those enrolled on courses leading to professional and vocational (non-degree) qualifications. Courses, leading to awards of professional bodies, are generally geared towards preparing students for externally examined qualifications and would follow a syllabus set by the professional body. Such courses face enormous time contraints. They are therefore characterised by an intensive pattern of classes during the time the student is at the college. This obviously poses practical difficulties for students in actually visiting the Library. Far more important, however, is the fact that the goal of many of these courses is simply to "get through" the examination. It may well be a desirable aim of higher education to learn how to use libraries and find information. However, for many of these students, the nature of the course and time constraints, mean that they are quite able to manage with a limited number of prescribed textbooks, which they buy, plus handouts which are given out in classes. It was not terribly startling, therefore, for us to find in our initial survey that only 36% of students on professional courses currently used the Library. If there was any surprise, it might have been that it was so high! The study also found that 46% of non-users cited the need to only use their own textbooks as the reason for not using the Library.

The vocational nature of many part-time courses means that lecturers often try to relate theoretical concepts taught in lectures to the practical experience which the students will have in their everyday work. Students, who were interviewed as part of the follow-up study, pointed out that this meant that reading was not always necessary for assignments. One might be set, for example, a practical exercise or an essay on how accounts progress through one's own work place. Furthermore, the close relationships between what one was doing at college and one's work could mean that relevant reading was done independently of the course anyway.

3.5 Attitudes of lecturers

In the follow-up study, 27% of non-users indicated that they were unaware of the existence of the Library or that, they as part-timers, could use it. Clearly this represents, in part, a failure by the Library to adequately publicise its services. However, it is also clear that some lecturers felt that library use was so irrelevant that they did not consider it important to make their students aware of the library facilities available in the Polytechnic. As one of the questionnaire respondents noted:

> "Improved communication between Library and teaching staff required. If this survey proves that part-time students do use/wish to use the Library the idea amongst academic staff that the Library is not relevant to part-time students should be dispelled."

The interaction between academics and librarians, and how a more effective partnership might be created, has recently been considered by Roe (1981). The problem in relation to part-timers, however, may often by compounded (especially on vocational courses) by the fact that classes are taken by part-time lecturers who spend only a limited amount of time in the Polytechnic themselves.

Expectations may also be crucial. Harris (1975), in a study, which included looking at the relationship between teaching methods and library use, found a common discrepancy between the assumptions and expectations of lecturers on the one hand, and the behaviour of students, on the other, concerning library use.

3.6 Other course-related determinants

There are two very important determinants of library use which have only been mentioned indirectly: teaching methods and assessment techniques. The follow-up study (although focusing more directly on library use by particular courses than the initial study) could only provide a little guidance on the influence on these factors. The methodology was not designed to give insights into these relationships. Furthermore, the range of courses offered by the two departments, being concentrated upon, was not sufficiently broad in terms of teaching methods and assessment techniques. Most of their part-time courses are geared towards externally examined, professional, non-degree awards and tend to utilise somewhat conventional lecture-based teaching degree methods. As mentioned already, most of these courses rely on one or two key texts which form the starting point for course reading. These "bibles" tend to be bought by students.

It is generally recognised that some teaching and learning methods will be more reliant on library use than others. A distinction needs to be made, however, between those which will likely to result in more intensive use of the Library and those which are likely to result in more extensive use. Harris (1975) found, although there is a realisation that "changes in teaching methods (or assessment methods) that result in students being required to find, evaluate and use information for themselves will result in more extensive use of the library, there is no recognition of alternative developments." He discovered that an individualized, self-paced, system of learning, "Personalized System Instruction", did not necessarily depend on libraries to a lesser extent than conventional organised courses "but since it specifies precisely the library materials required for the successful completion of each unit, it probably results in more intensive use of the bookstock" (Harris 1975, p. 137). It could be argued, however, that some kinds of resource-based individualized learning could actually lead to less dependence on libraries because all the information, which is needed by the student, is contained in "packaged" materials. This is sometimes believed to be the case with the Open University. As Roe (1981) observes"... in some quarters there is alarm, because it is suspected that the problems of relationships between teaching/learning and library ... have been solved by abolishing libraries," (p.58). He does, however, go on to query this view of teaching and learning through the Open University.

It is important for us to recognise that there are differences between individualized, self-paced, methods of learning and "independent study". Indeed, in their extreme forms they might actually be seen as being based at different ends of a spectrum of learning theories (see Entwistle and Hounsell 1975). We need to look very closely at how these methods and others (perhaps, particularly, the ones which allow students greater autonomy in their learning) relate to library resource provision and affect utilisation.

Assessment techniques are often closely tied up with teaching methods and it may not always be possible to distinguish between the influence of teaching methods and assessment techniques on library use. Noble (1979), drawing on recent Swedish research on student learning (Marton and Saljo 1976), points out that the use of objective tests in course work may induce students to adopt a style of learning that suffices for tests. She goes on to say:

> "There are apparently many courses in the colleges where the library books play no direct part in the process of student-learning. Their contents may well be mediated by lecturers and "republished" as handouts, tailored to the course needs of busy task-orientated students."
>
> (pp. 88-89)

Although she is talking about courses in colleges of further education, such a supposition may also be applicable to vocationally orientated, externally examined, professional courses in polytechnics although, at present there is no evidence to support such a view.

3.7 Availability and use of other libraries

It is probably very much more important that we differentiate between library use in general and the use of the library of a particular institution when we are looking at part-time students. In both our studies, we found that part-time students tend to use a wide range of libraries. A high level of use of public libraries, in particular, was suggested. On the first study, 51% of respondents indicated that they used public libraries for their course work. In the follow-up study, it was found that 43% of accountancy students and 39% of economics and banking students used public libraries. However, the first study also showed that students who used the Polytechnic Library also tended to use other libraries, suggesting, perhaps, that some courses are more dependent on library use than others. Nevertheless, 23% of the those part-time students, who did not use the Polytechnic Library, indicated that use of another library was the reason. Clearly access to other libraries, barriers to their use, and perceptions of their adequacy will affect library use in general as well as use of the library of any particular institution. Factors such as adequacy of library provision, experience of using libraries, and where the individual lives and works will in turn influence levels of library use.

3.8 Personal circumstances

It has already been mentioned how heterogeneous part-timers are as a group, being drawn from a wide cross-section of different backgrounds and circumstances. Clearly, these individual differences have a profound effect on attitudes towards study, the ways in which study is approached, and the amount of time available for study. These factors in turn are likely to influence levels and patterns of library use. In the interviews, conducted as part of our own follow-up study, for example, it was clear from comments made by interviewees that personal circumstances had a profound effect on the amount of time available for study. Most notably, it appeared that it was very much more difficult for someone who was married and had family commitments than for someone who was single.

4 CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The research work which has been conducted at City of London Polytechnic suggests that course-related factors (such as subject of study, level of study, mode of attendance, type of course, and attitudes of lecturers) have an important influence on optimum levels of use of the library of any particular institution by part-time students.

4.2 There is a need to know more about how these different factors inter-relate, and what the effect of teaching methods and assessment techniques are, on levels and patterns of use of the library.

4.3 No one approach to library provision is likely to meet the needs of all part-time students in polytechnics. More account needs to be taken of the nature of part-time courses and the role of the library in the teaching/learning process of particular courses.

4.4 Some part-time students at present have little need to use libraries. They can rely on one or two key texts which they buy. It would be wrong to assume, however, that most part-time students have no need to use libraries.

4.5 We are already seeing greater library use as a result of the introduction of courses such as TEC and BEC. This illustrates how innovations in teaching and learning can affect the Library. The growth in the overall numbers of part-time students, which we can expect, plus the changes in the composition of the part-time student population (with greater flexibility in modes of attendance and an increase in the number of people who have never before experienced higher education), will probably lead to greater pressure on the library from part-time students.

4.6 Further investigation is needed to look at the role of the library in particular part-time courses. We need to look much more closely at how library resources can be developed and organised to meet the needs of different (but probably overlapping) groups of part-time students. Such investigation needs to look at how individual backgrounds and circumstances, as well as the adequacy of library provision and effectiveness of library services, might mediate to influence use of the library of a particular polytechnic as well as library use in general.

4.7 A starting point for such investigation by polytechnics, either individually or in collaboration with one another, is described in Blagden and Payne (1983). This involves:

i) examining the size and demographic trends of particular sub-groups which make up polytechnic student communities.

ii) utilising management information from automated issue systems to look at the registration and borrowing patterns of particular part-time courses and of sections of the part-time student community.

iii) studying fairly coherent sub-group of part-time students and their use of and need for library services.

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TABLE 1

PART-TIME STUDENTS IN POLYTECHNICS BY TYPE OF COURSE'

	Day		Evening only		Total
	N	%	N	%	
Advanced					
Postgraduate	5,174	(68)	2,484	(32)	7,658
First degree	5,799	(68)	2,690	(32)	8,489
Teacher training	3,451	(58)	2,547	(42)	5,998
TEC/BEC Courses	9,927	(95)	526	(5)	10,453
HNC/HND	3,438	(88)	448	(12)	3,886
Professional qualifications	15,108	(65)	7,995	(35)	23,103
College Diplomas/Certs.	2,598	(76)	801	(24)	3,399
Other Advanced	1,285	(75)	424	(25)	1,709
	46,780	(72)	17,915	(28)	64,695
Non-Advanced					
TEC/BEC Courses	1,143	(94)	73	(6)	1,216
City and Guilds	2,811	(82)	620	(18)	3,431
Professional qualifications	1,057	(24)	3,385	(76)	4,442
College Diplomas/Certs.	459	(62)	283	(38)	742
Other Non-Advanced	3,107	(35)	5,756	(65)	8,863
	8,577	(46)	10,117	(54)	18,694
	55,357	(66)	28,032	(34)	83,389

' Based upon statistics contained in Table F21, Statistics of Further Education November 1980. (Department of Education and Science 1982). The figures relate to enrolments as at November 1980.

THE PART-TIME STUDENT IN THE LIBRARY: AN AUSTRALIAN VIEWPOINT FROM COBURG COLLEGE OF ADVANCED EDUCATION, MELBOURNE

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The Library operates in an environment where the part-time student is regarded as of equal status to the full-time student, and library services attempt to reflect this belief. Part-time study in Australia has been accepted by both colleges and employers for many years. Problems in providing library services to part-time students are discussed, and the solutions attempted outlined. The important role of senior staff in monitoring the effectiveness of these services for such students is stressed. Attention is drawn to a situation, quite different from the UK, where nearly half the Library's staff were part-time students themselves. A description is given of the use of the Library's facilities on a part-time basis by the sixth formers of two neighbouring schools.

This paper offers reflections based on experience during a four year contract appointment as Chief Librarian at an Australian College of Advanced Education in Melbourne, Victoria. These thoughts are put on paper within a year of leaving Australia. Since few amongst you will have been to Australia, fewer still to Coburg, some background information may be helpful. The college had about 1,600 students, planned to rise to 3,000 by the end of this decade. This expansion is now unlikely to take place. The single site Library of 3,320 sq. metres capable of holding up to 400,000 volumes was opened in 1980, and I was considerably involved in the planning and furnishing of it. Whilst the number of part-time students varied from year-to-year, they were usually about a quarter of the total, and consisted of teachers, youth workers, prison officers, and police officers. The part-time students came mainly from the northern suburbs of Melbourne and the rural hinterland to the north, and some travelled great distances. Nearly half the library staff were themselves part-time students, and to this interesting and indeed significant factor, quite different from the British scene, I shall return.

There is a long tradition of part-time study in Australia, and universities and colleges are much more geared to part-time study than they are in the UK. A significant number of students combine part-time work with part-time study, as did three of my own staff. Many others combine a full-time job with part-time study. Quite often part-time and full-time students defer their studies for one or more years in the midst of their courses. The universities and colleges are quite amenable to this and their organisation seem quite able to deal with the situation. No one regards this action of deferring by a part-time or full-time student as in any way worthy of blame or censure. Deferral was for a variety of reasons. To start a family, to work full-time for a year to earn more money, to break from study and perhaps think more about subject and career options, to indulge in extensive travel abroad or to "go walkabout" in Australia, or even to clear off to Northern Queensland and "go troppo".

Employers in the main welcome part-time study as a way of retaining good staff, and as an indication of such qualities as motivation, industry, and willingness to extent and update knowledge. Tuition in higher educaton is free, unlike the UK, for part-timers as well as full-time students. The average Australian probably feels that this subsidy is a better way of spending public money in a country where the school leaving age is 15, than the UK way of compelling tens of thousands of unwilling and sometimes disruptive pupils to stay on at school until they are 16, and at the same time charging fees to students who are trying to continue their education.

All this leads me to state that my view based on what I have read and seen, is that in Australia the part-time student is regarded as of equal status and importance to the full-time student. What were the implications of this philosophy for an academic library?

Clearly we felt committed to try and ensure that the part-time student as far as was possible received as good a service as the full-time student. This meant for example equal access to library tuition programmes, book reservation systems, loan facilities, and library machines such as microreaders, photocopiers, cassette recorders, filmstrip projectors, still and movie cameras, typewriters. No pulling out of video plugs at 5.00 p.m., no locking of the project room or the photocopying room, no denying access to projection or recording areas. It followed naturally for example that a number of library tuition programmes took place in the afternoon after 4.00 p.m., or in the evening.

Now I would like to consider in more detail some of the problems encountered in providing library services to part-time students. Two of these which I shall briefly mention were problems of affluence, and thus probably would not occur in the present day UK. These were car parking for part-time students and the loan to them of library equipment such as film projectors, typewriters, cameras, etc. If you haven't 600 students cars on campus by midday, you may not have a parking problem for those who arrive after 3.00 p.m.! If you can't afford to buy a lot of library equipment for loan, then you are not going to have to face the problem of how to earmark loan facilities for part-timers. In the planning of the new Library care was taken to provide large car parks at ground level within 100 yards of the building, and these were screened by fast growing shrubs. This dealt with the problem, and at the same time got the students' cars out of the Library's own car park and delivery bay area. By limiting library equipment loans to two days and overnights, and by encouraging weekend loans, the needs of part-time students were met to a large extent, but as usual as our facilities increased, so did the demand for them. A different system was in operation for the loan of typewriters. These, both simple portables and quality typewriters some with large type facility for dissertation, projects, etc., were kept in the Project Room like the non-loanable typewriters, and both were thereby under the control of the Reader Services Section and not the Audio-Visual Section. They were lent for the same period as books, initially for two weeks, and subject to recall by telephone or mailing.

A more serious problem was that of ensuring that part-time students got to know as soon as possible the key personnel in Reader Services, Periodicals, and Audio-Visual areas. A Reader Services enquiry desk and an Audio-Visual area enquiry desk were in operation, both well away from the counter area.

As soon as possible at the beginning of their studies all part-time students were given a tour of the Library, introduced in an informal way to key areas and their staff, given a talk on the use of the Library and its' facilities, given some practical exercises, presented with a copy of the printed library guide, and shown a video which in a simple and brief way made some points about the use of the Library, and perhaps more important introduced on screen the Reader Services Librarian, the Periodicals Librarian, and the Audio-Visual Librarian, thus ensuring that they were known by sight even if they were not able to be present at every group's programme. The Reader Services Librarian and less frequently myself sometimes appeared at evening classes to find out how part-time students were getting on with their use of the Library, certain misunderstandings were removed, and useful feedback was received on such matters as titles in heavy demand. I held a meeting of senior staff usually monthly on a Monday morning at 11.00 a.m. (timing deliberate), attended by the Reader Services Librarian, Chief Cataloguer, AV Librarian, Acquisitions Librarian, Periodicals Librarian, and myself as Chief Librarian. Many problems were talked over including quite a few relating to part-time students.

On reflection, the two main problems encountered with part-time students were, firstly how to get their books returned on time or not greatly overdue, and secondly how to get the right book to the right person in time. Since I had encountered the same problems in my previous appointments in the University of London and the Polytechnic of Central London, I have been inclined to the view that they may well be universal problems in service to part-time students.

I inherited at Coburg both a very short loan period of one week, and a fines system for seriously overdue books. I found neither system effective for securing a reasonably quick turnover of reading material to allow greater availability for students. Since I have never found a normal loan period as short as a week in a UK library, I shall not take your time to discuss the pros and cons of this system. I have never liked fines systems. Perhaps this is a hangover from my public library days when one had to take fines off children knowing that some parents would then stop them from using the library. Unless one has a longer loan period for part-time students, which most student unions would not accept, a fines systems bears more heavily on the part-time student than the full-time student, who has many more opportunities to visit the library. In any event this system did not work, the books were not coming back, and a heavy burden of extra work was laid on the library staff, and on the Business Manager's staff. The wealthy students of whom there are more than a few in Australia were quite happy to pay hefty fines to retain a book for a term or so. It was convenient and still much cheaper than buying the book. In the end we got rid of the fines system, and had a visual index of defaulters at the counter who were stopped from further borrowing having previously received a third overdue warning card, and this proved much more effective.

Part-time students tend to home in to a library at particular times on particular days, and it was not too difficult in most cases to supplement the third overdue by reminding them that they were getting close to losing borrowing rights. Life was made a little easier for the part-time students by a well-designed book return unit, which meant that when the Library was closed and indeed the College buildings closed, books could still be returned.

More difficult was the task of providing the book required at the time the part-time student required it. Forgive me if I recount a saga that you probably know already from personal experience. Part-time students and full-time students are recommended the same titles. Lecturers recommend an out-of-date edition. Do they really want that edition, or have they not revised their reading list for four years? We chase them tactfully and find out. Every year we send out notices to lecturers requesting copies of reading lists well before first term. Response rate is seldom above 75%. We try hard with part-time students. Every year we go through the College Handbook, which contains long lists of recommended titles like British university handbooks used to do when printing was cheaper, copy coding procedures are applied, and we attempt to have the books available before term begins. Still we find part-time students have problems, but we think we find out about them from the students fairly quickly.

Yes, we had a Reserve Collection, and it was most useful to part-time students. It had about 800 volumes, and was culled annually and additional copies added after one year's cycle of lectures, seminars, projects, work experience, and examinations. At one stage I pushed it up to about 2,000 volumes against the advice of the Reader Services Librarian, and I go on record as saying that she was right and I was wrong. Lecturers recommend many titles for Reserve Collection that students never ask for. I have grown increasingly cynical over the years about lecturers' ability to identify what their students are going to read. Unrequested and unused material must be taken out of Reserve Collections and put back on the open shelves. Part-time students were further helped by the fact that we lent second copies of Reserve Collection titles overnight or at weekends.

One service frequently and effectively used by the part-time students was the book reservation system. Printed lists of recommended literature in handbooks, reading lists from lecturers, give a library some idea of what titles are in demand by students, but book reservations are a firm indication that a reader has searched in vain and his or her need is evidenced by willingness to fill in a reservation card. Reservation cards were posted when the material was available on a large Reservations Board prominently situated inside the entrance.

Part-time students living at a distance were often notified by mail or phone. At the least sign of heavy demand extra copies were purchased locally (we had our own bookshop and were within twenty minutes drive of two university bookshops), given priority cataloguing and processing, and would be available to Reservations within twenty-four hours. Saturation buying on some titles increased the chances of part-time students getting titles needed by many students.

Inter-library loans were fully available to all part-time students, but were little used except for periodical articles and older book titles. Not unconnected with this perhaps was the rapid expansion of our bookstock from 37,000 in 1977 to 120,000 in 1981.

It is sometimes very difficult for the part-time student to obtain scarce and exotic titles needed for project and dissertation work. To assist both part-time and full-time students, we commenced blanket order approval programmes for much of the British and American output relating to Education, Police Studies and Criminology and Youth Work, and more finely delineated approval programmes for Australiana, and for books relating to countries where our students had placements or which figured prominently in their dissertation work, for example, Indonesia, Papua Niugini, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, Tuvalu, Tahiti, Cook Islands, New Caledonia, Nauru, Ocean Island. Our part-time students also derived great benefit from being able to use the State Library, and not just for dissertation work. Open seven days a week, and all day, with open access and no ticket requirement, and holding about a million and a half volumes, this library in spite of being understaffed and underfinanced remains one of the finest libraries in the Southern Hemisphere. Time and again my part-time students commented on how helpful this library's staff and facilities were to their work. There is only one problem. The State Library does sometimes lend books to other libraries so once in a while the catalogue promises what the system cannot deliver. Advocates of lending by British copyright libraries please note that this can be annoying. A part-time student may have driven 40 kilometres to find one wanted title missing. Still its only another 4 kilometres to the bay beaches! Try again next weekend.

I found my library staff particularly willing to help part-time students and to defend their interests, even to the extent of supporting efforts eventually successful to get evening catering facilities improved and extended. Verily the Australian student army marches on its stomach. As I have said nearly half the library staff were part-time students themselves. In 1980 for example 12 out of 25. This total consisted of post-graduate degrees 2, post-graduate diploma in Librarianship 2, post-graduate diploma in Computing 1, degree courses (not Librarianship) 3, library technicians' certificate 3, additional matriculation subject 1.

We were able to release four people per annum for half a day's study leave in term time, and allow flexible working hours for some others. I have never had a College management that has been more supportive towards library staff doing part-time study, and I am convinced that the Library benefited. Not only were staff better educated and trained, not only was it easier with the flexible hours to arrange evening staffing, not only could good staff be more easily retained, but part-time students were meeting library staff who were experienced, motivated, and sympathetic to part-time study.

Finally I draw attention to one particular group of part-time students that used the Library. These were the matriculation students, about three dozen or so, from our two neighbouring schools. They had full library facilities in term and vacation. Their ages would vary from 15 to 18, but most of them were 16 or 17. Like UK sixthformers doing A levels, they did not have a very heavy class programme, and were able to use our library quite frequently. It was a fascinating and for me unique experience to watch schoolchildren moving into the use of a 100,000+ volume library in a 3,000+ sq. metres building. I wish I had more time to talk about this experiment. Briefly, we had no problems with them as library users. Undoubtedly our much greater resources helped their studies, apart from the fact that they had a place to study in after school hours (and with universal air conditioning - important in the Australian climate). The teachers were very pleased, as were the education authorities, and the local councillors. Several of the pupils were later recruited to our degree courses, maybe having liked what they saw on the campus. Once again I acknowledge full and enthusiastic co-operation from College management in a venture which began with a recommendation from the Reader Services Librarian to myself following a meeting of local librarians.

I think it is much more pleasant being a part-time student in Australia than in the UK, and I had better own up to being one of the 12 out of 25 previously mentioned. There are more part-time jobs available for those who want to work and study. Employers and management are more co-operative. Universities and colleges are more co-operative and flexible in study arrangements. Even the taxation office allows you to keep receipts and set book purchases for study purposes against tax. There are extensive opportunities for distance learning and correspondence degree, both Open University type course unit and more traditional examination structures. Why you can even, heresy of heresies, become a qualified librarian by external study and attending an annual short vacation course. But the continuing support for part-time study in Australia arises from something deep in the national way of life. It is part of the tradition of self-help. It is us telling the bureaucrats that one can still become a graduate even if one cannot afford to move from the outback to a university city, even if one cannot afford to study full-time or has to drop out for a year. In this never give up attitude to higher education, and some students go on year after year, in this determination, even stubborness, there lies a hope and commitment that is worth exporting.

LIBRARY AWARENESS AND THE PART-TIME STUDENT IN FURTHER EDUCATION

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The impact of the part-time curriculum is outlined. A simple measure of library awareness based on library membership records is proposed for the smaller library. Application at Farnborough College of Technology reveals on aggregate part-time membership ranging from 10.5 to 20.3 per cent of enrolments depending upon mode of attendance. Suggestions are made for action based on the findings.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Much of the folklore about the use of libraries by students in further education colleges emphasizes that part-time students do not use the college libraries that are available to them. A wide variety of reasons are often put forward to explain why this should be so. A common explanation is that the student simply does not have the time to visit the library. However such "explanations" are not very helpful in understanding such behaviour. There surely must be an implicit value judgement that time spent outside the library is more productive. Sometimes it is even claimed, (often in casual conversation with teaching staff), that the part-timer does not need to use the library and that students perceive this idea and allocate their time accordingly. Such are the kinds of attitudes often faced by many libraries operating within what Medlicott (1973) has called the "further education vacuum cleaner".

2 LIBRARIES AND THE PART-TIME CURRICULUM

What lies at the root of these ideas is perhaps found in a project report commissioned by the Further Education Curriculum Review and Development Unit (1980). This collocated much of the evidence on the quality of educational experience met by students on day release courses. Teaching and learning styles were found on the whole, formal and characterized by emphasis on instruction, teacher-centredness, passivity of the learner, repetitive drill, and emphasis on covering a substantial syllabus content geared to externally set examinations.

Bearing this in mind it is hardly surprising that library use which may be associated with independent study and self-paced learning is often perceived as unnecessary for part-time students. In fact it may help to explain why so many libraries in the further education sector have such poor resources. A cycle of deprivation is set up whereby poor library resources have blunted academic awareness of the support libraries can give to educational innovation. Curriculum development is then retarded and the rationale for an expanded library service is undermined. Fortunately external agencies sometimes intervene and innovation is enabled to proceed. Examples of this sort of intervention are the curriculum developments adopted and promoted by the Technician and Business Education Councils.

3 LIBRARY AWARENESS

Use of college libraries by students requires them to have a certain level of awareness of the resources and services available. Educational librarians have long been aware of this fact and many have responded by actively marketing their library and its services. Library posters and guides, induction tours and talks have all been part of this marketing effort. However many of these activities have been directed at the full-time student with the occasional attempts to persuade the course supervisors of the higher level part-time courses to encourage their students to visit the library.

A more concentrated campaign towards part-time students may require the librarian to know the extent of their existing library awareness and the behavioural patterns that follow it. This appears to be the rationale behind the comprehensive surveys undertaken at the City of London Polytechnic. However such surveys do require the sort of statistical expertise and computational resources not easily available to the smaller libraries found in the further education sector. In addition the administrative support required to mount such surveys may often be in short supply.

4 LIBRARY AWARENESS AND LIBRARY MEMBERSHIP

However one way in which all smaller libraries can generate some measure of the library awareness of students is by careful analysis of their membership records. At Farnborough College of Technology the possible removal of a number of departments to another site necessitated the rapid generation of information about what might be the impact on the library. Like many libraries library membership required a student to visit the library premises and to annually complete a registration procedure in order to borrow material. These registration cards were then matched with the college enrolment records to give an analysis of the membership by departmental origin and mode of attendance. The results are given in Table 1 in the Appendix. Since this information was required rapidly the analysis was completed manually although in the longer term there is no reason why the computer software used to generate the college enrolment statistics could not be amended to do the job. A continuous monitoring system could then operate to provide management information for the library.

This sort of approach to library awareness is perhaps relatively unsophisticated especially in its view of what such awareness entails. It is evidence of the extent to which students of differing departmental origins and modes of attendance have physically located and visited the premises and registered their interest in borrowing material. It is not a measure of library use or of the level of understanding of the educational potential of the library. It does not capture data relating to the use of the premises for studying with reference material restricted to in-library use only. It does however provide an easily assembled profile of the library's readership that may be used as the basis for further investigation or action.

5 FINDINGS

Reference to Table 1 enables the easy detection of differences and similarities between departments and modes of attendance. For example there is strong evidence that part-time students have less library awareness than the full-time student. Within the part-time mode the evening-only student seems much less likely to join the library than other part-time students. However within evening-only students there are departmental differences between department G, D and the other departments. This suggests other factors are at work with perhaps the level of courses providing an explanation. Department F appears to have an unusally high level of library membership amongst its part-time day and evening students whilst its evening-only students have an unusually low level of membership. This suggests the need for further investigation of its evening-only courses to discover the factors behind this behaviour.

6 ACTION

In this way examination of such evidence as displayed in Table 1 builds up a profile of the membership of the library that leads to the identification of areas in which the library seems to be failing to penetrate. The next stage might be a specific survey aimed at a particular department or departmental sector to establish the reasons for a low level of library membership. The library might attempt to aim a specific awareness campaign at a selected target group. Departments with an above average level of library membership might be encouraged to consider formal user education programmes for part-time students.

Experience has shown that the library which wishes to seize the initiative and develop its role within the institution requires evidence with which to influence those that are able to assist its expansion. Evidence that sits in the filing cabinet awaiting its day of action is wasted effort.

All educational librarians have some sort of idea of the use of their libraries by part-time students. It is usual for these ideas to be more impressionistic than based on any systematic collection of evidence. The smaller libraries in particular might find the acquisition of statistical evidence by survey a daunting experience. Making a start by analysing the information already available in the membership records seems a low cost method available to many libraries who seek to discover their visibility to the part-time student.

REFERENCE

FURTHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT UNIT (1980) Day release - a desk study: the nature, aims, and quality of the education and training undertaken by young people following day release courses leading to recognised qualifications. (Project Report 2). London: FEU.

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APPENDIX

TABLE 1

LIBRARY AWARENESS AMONGST STUDENTS AT FARNBOROUGH COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY'

DEPARTMENT	FULL-TIME	PART-TIME DAY	PART-TIME EVENING	EVENING ONLY	
A. ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING MATHEMATICS AND COMPUTING					
Library registration	32	11	84	10	137
Enrolment	53	150	567	318	1,088
Library awareness	0.604	0.074	0.149	0.032	0.126
B. SCIENCE					
Library registration	87	6	12	7	112
Enrolment	139	51	102	101	393
Library awareness	0.626	0.118	0.118	0.070	0.285
C. MECHANICAL, PRODUCTION AND AERONAUTICAL ENGINEERING					
Library registration	102	11	98	11	22
Enrolment	162	111	826	112	1,211
Library awareness	0.630	0.100	0.119	0.099	0.184
D. BUSINESS STUDIES					
Library registration	138	69	20	36	263
Enrolment	193	173	119	188	673
Library awareness	0.716	0 399	0.169	0.192	0.391
E. HUMANITIES					
Library registration	147	4	3	29	183
Enrolment	196	59	11	273	539
Library awareness	0.750	0.021	0.273	0.107	0.340
F. FOOD, HEALTH, FASHION STUDIES					
Library registration	166	13	174	4	357
Enrolment	281	45	392	161	879
Library awareness	0.591	0.289	0.444	0.025	0.407

	FULL-TIME	PART-TIME DAY	PART-TIME EVNING	EVENING ONLY	
G. PROFESSIONAL AND MANAGEMENT STUDIES					
Library registration	33	25	58	41	157
Enrolment	33	111	198	188	530
Library awareness	1.000	0.226	0.293	0.219	0.297
H. SECRETARIAL AND COMMERCIAL STUDIES					
Library registration	39			6	45
Enrolment	194	47		41	282
Library awareness	0.202			0.147	0.160
Library registration	744	139	449	144	1,476
Enrolment	1,251	747	2,215	1,382	5,595
Library awareness	0.595	0.187	0.203	0.105	0.264

' All statistics relate to enrolments and registrations at the end of the Autumn 1981 term. Library awareness measured by proportion of departmental enrolments registered with the library.

'FLEXISTUDY' AND THE COLLEGE LIBRARY

Marie Adams
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A flexible approach to education in the form of open learning systems requires a flexible response from college library services. In the attempt to accommodate open learning students alongside regular full and part-time students, this can be most readily achieved by the adaptation of existing library procedures to meet the needs of these students who do not visit the college on a regular basis. But the key factors of extended opening hours, availability of professional expertise and user education have additional resource implications. Without these resources, learning cannot be properly termed 'open' and open learning students will be reduced to the cinderella status of the majority of part-time students in a college.

FlexiStudy is the open learning system pioneered by Barnet College in 1977 which combines the home study of correspondence material with tutorial contact. It meets the needs of students who are unable or unwilling to attend full or part-time courses offered in the conventional mode. It also enables colleges to offer courses where the minimum enrolment requirement cannot be met. FlexiStudy is not a suitable study method for every student, but for many it is a unique opportunity in a similar way to the Open University. Therefore it is fulfilling a need hitherto unmet rather than detracting from existing provision. However, unlike the Open University, students are given counselling prior to enrolment and indeed this may result in some students being advised to follow a course of study by conventional methods, and while able to study at home and at their own pace, students do have access to the full resources of a local college, including the library services. Further information on FlexiStudy may be found in the Manual (Barnet College 1980) and in a study of six open learning systems (Spencer 1980, part 2).

This opening up and more flexible approach to education has engendered an enthusiasm which has united colleges from all over the country. Barnet College, itself having some 400 FlexiStudy students, now has contact with more than 120 colleges offering 50 FlexiStudy courses. An Open Learning Federation has recently been set up to bring together in partnership all those working in the field, to extend the work and to investigate and expand the fund of learning materials. It was predicted at a national conference in 1980, when there were 19 centres offering FlexiStudy courses that within five years there would be hardly a college in the country without some form of FlexiStudy scheme, and a hope for the future is to see an open learning network which will allow students to use the resources of any college.

Being the librarian of a pioneer college has brought many enquiries from professional colleagues at a time when their colleges were considering the introduction of FlexiStudy. In several cases this consideration has been initiated by the librarian and/or library committee. By 1980 the level of enquiries was such that I responded to these requests for information in the form of a paper entitled 'The Implications of FlexiStudy for the College Library'. In this paper I outlined the development of FlexiStudy and the response of the Barnet College Library Services to this new learning system. A flexible approach to education requires a flexible response from the college as a whole. The undoubted success of FlexiStudy is due not only to the meeting of need, but to the enthusiasm, consultation and co-operation among the staff of a college. From the library point of view at Barnet, there was a close liaison with the FlexiStudy organisers from the very beginning. I was included in meetings of FlexiStudy tutors and in national conferences held at the College. This involvement is vital, forewarned being forearmed in the understanding of the needs of these students.

For this paper I have taken as keywords for college libraries in their approach to the needs of FlexiStudy students accessibility (of services, including professional expertise), flexibility (in procedures) and familiarisation (through user education). These aims are not new to librarians, particularly where part-time students are concerned, but neither are the problems of scattered sites, communication with part-time students and their limited opportunity to use college libraries, combined with those of library resources. My own college has a main campus with two outlying centres and uses 43 other sites. The Library is situated on the main campus with only a small collection of material being provided at one of the outlying centres. Barnet is a large, sprawling borough and reliance on public transport is understandably a prohibiting factor for some students in visiting the main campus simply to use the library facilities. The part-time students outnumber the full-time students by 8 : 1. The membership of the Library, though indicative only of those students who wish to make use of the borrowing facilities, comprises 91% of full-time students, 7% of part-time students and 33% of FlexiStudy students. The heavy use made of the Library by full-time students, the advent of BEC, TEC and DATEC with their encouragement towards student-based learning, the establishment of a Library audio-visual service and the centralisation of College audio-visual resources have all served to push any greater drive towards provision for the needs of the regular part-time students further and further into the background.

It was understood from the very beginning of FlexiStudy that there would be a different set of problems to face in accommodating these students alongside regular full and part-time students. Their pattern of attendance for tutorials would be irregular and rarely in uniform groups and many students would live some distance from the College (opening hours, loan period, user education). They could enrol at any time during the year and many would be continuing students for up to five, now three, years without re-enrolment (membership, issue of tickets, end of the academic year arrangements). Many students would be studying similar courses to the regular students, particularly in the GCE subject areas (competition for material). It was decided to try to respond to the needs of these students as the needs became apparent and before the situation became as out of hand as that of the regular part-time students.

Apart from initial provision of a reference set of the National Extension College correspondence material and the stocking of background material from the lists provided by the FlexiStudy tutors, it was perhaps two years before the numbers of FlexiStudy students using the Library warranted a definite change in policies as opposed to dealing with the needs on an individual basis. One common concern expressed by professional colleagues is the apparent little use made of the college library by FlexiStudy students in the early stages. This could be explained by the time needed to adjust to a new study method, the personal possession of correspondence materials and set texts, with the need to refer to other materials possibly only for assignments, and the more immediate accessibility of other libraries according to the students' personal circumstances. But this is only supposition as there has been no research, to my knowledge, into this area of library use.

In the following list of points for consideration by library services in their response to the needs of FlexiStudy students, it will be seen from the Barnet College practises that the major changes have been procedural. Matters such as opening hours, full access to resources and user education are dependant on staffing resources and the introduction of FlexiStudy has brought no additional resources to the Library Services.

1. Opening hours

Barnet College Library had the advantage of already providing evening services (until 2000 hours Monday to Thursday) and of being open regularly during the vacations (0900 - 1230, 1330 - 1700 hours Monday to Friday). The Library is situated on two floors and full services are provided throughout opening hours when the Library is fully staffed, with the exception of some restrictions on the early morning and lunch period opening of the first floor services. The Assistant Librarian and myself each cover two evening duties a week. We have discussed weekend opening, possibly Saturdays. However, although willing ourselves to provide this service, it could not be pursued without additional staffing to cover compensatory time during the week. I feel very strongly that all students of a college should have full access to the library services, but the staffing level is such that with two service points any shortage results in restrictions, particularly on the evening services and on the reference and audio-visual services sited on the first floor. Services requiring a technician, for example video playback, are offered on an advance booking basis, including two evenings a week, but subject to staff availability. We cannot therefore guarantee full services to FlexiStudy students who are able to use the library services only in the evenings.

2. Membership

All students of the College, whether enrolling for full-time, part-time day, day-release, evening, FlexiStudy or short courses, are entitled to use the Library facilities. No distinction is made between full and part-time students, all of whom are entitled to six tickets. The Library uses Browne charging and the colour of students' tickets is changed each year to ensure that students are currently enrolled with the College. However, whereas regular students enrol each year in September with additional part-time enrolments at the beginning of each term, FlexiStudy students may enrol at any time during the year and may take up to three years to complete their courses. Initially new tickets were issued to these students at the beginning of each academic year. Now, however, their original membership card and tickets are clearly marked to indicate that they are continuing students. As may be seen from the above mentioned membership statistics, the FlexiStudy percentage is much higher than that of regular part-time students. But then the majority of tutorials do take place on the main campus.

3. Loan period

The Library has a short loan period of two weeks with the option of renewal. It also sends out overdue notices very promptly. This is to ensure circulation of stock and also the return of material as the duration of College courses can be as short as six weeks. However, it is not practicable to expect FlexiStudy students to comply with this short loan period as the average interval between tutorials is three to four weeks. Postage costs are charged on overdue notices and even to renew material by telephone is an added expense. Therefore the loan period and overdue notices are not applied to Flexistudy students. Although material is still issued for the normal loan period for the Library to retain the option of recall in case of an urgent request, tickets are filed by term and letters requesting the return or renewal of material are sent out only at the end of each term. Students may then comply with this request on their next visit to the College. A close liaison with FlexiStudy tutors is required to ensure notification of students withdrawing from courses. The withdrawal rate is about one third. Communication with FlexiStudy tutors is a comparatively simple matter as the majority are full-time tutors of the College.

The only area where we have not been able to make any real adjustment for FlexiStudy students is the Overnight Loan Collection of textbooks most in demand. FlexiStudy students are effectively barred from using this collection, as, in fact, are the majority of part-time students. However, where there is more than one copy of a text in this Collection, lending arrangements have been more generous to FlexiStudy students during the summer vacation period.

4. Material

The Library provides a reference set of correspondence material, mainly to assist prospective students. The FlexiStudy organisers very helpfully provide reading lists. Students are advised to buy course texts, but the Library also stocks copies as there is often some delay in the acquisition of such material by the student. The policy on duplication varies from library to library, but however many copies a library is prepared to provide, the problem of competition arises particularly where FlexiStudy students are studying similar courses to regular students. I am not in favour of restricting collections of material for use by a special group of students and therefore FlexiStudy students are encouraged to make full use of the reservation service. If necessary duplicate copies may be purchased and routed directly to FlexiStudy students in this way. We are not aware of the need to extend the reservation collection period of one week to accommodate FlexiStudy students. Where cassette tape material is required, copyright permitting, it is a simple enough matter to duplicate copies for loan to FlexiStudy students. In time it may also be possible to provide cassette tape recorders for loan to students. Audio-visual material other than cassette tapes is for use only on the College premises, the Library having a well equipped resources room for this purpose.

FlexiStudy students have expressed their delight in the wealth of background material available to them in the College Library, often not to be found in their local public libraries.

5. End of the academic year

As has been mentioned, FlexiStudy enrolments are valid for three years. It is the usual practice of the Library to recall all stock at the end of the summer term, when students cease to be members of the College, for stocktake purposes. The main enrolment takes place in September, but continuing students may borrow material for the vacation after the stocktake by completing a new membership card and obtaining the signature of a tutor guarantor in lieu of a College receipt number. It is unreasonable to expect FlexiStudy students to comply with this practice when their courses of study are still in progress and they are not required to enrol annually. Therefore just the usual end of term FlexiStudy reminder letter is sent out.

6. Publicity/User Education

The Library issues a brief publicity leaflet for display in the College and a more detailed guide to the services which is readily available in the Library. The services are also publicised in FlexiStudy leaflets, including one entitled 'How to get the best from FlexiStudy with Barnet College'. However, more can be done to reach individual students, for example, the organisation of packs of Library information leaflets to be regularly given to tutors for distribution to their students. During the main College enrolment FlexiStudy tutors provide an enquiry and enrolment service within the Library itself.

So far there has been no provision of a formal user education programme for FlexiStudy students. They are a difficult group of students to reach for this purpose due to the individual nature of their study and irregular attendance patterns. One solution in mind is to offer alternative sessions on the use of libraries which students could attend on a voluntary basis. The lack of progress in this area has been due to the demands on just the one tutor librarian for the whole College. User education is therefore the one-to-one session, either by appointment or, circumstances permitting, on demand.

7. The Library's role

Anyone who has studied by correspondence will understand the loneliness of learning at a distance. Often the problems which arise have little to do with the difficulty of the academic content of the course, but rather with motivation, self-discipline, confidence, the application of study skills, more often than not in the face of pressure of work and home. Therefore the Library staff, seen as independent and 'neutral' figures in a college, find themselves in the position of adopting a counselling role as well as assisting with information retrieval. It is particularly valuable if FlexiStudy students can be identified as soon as possible because their visits to the Library are much less frequent than those of regular students. Some tutors have made it a practice to introduce their students to the Library staff personally.

In this way they can be warmly welcomed and encouraged to request assistance. In other words a little more 'fuss' is made of these students because the regular contact, from which confidence and relationships are established, is lacking. Often when dealing with the slightest of enquiries an anxiety or problem is revealed which can, if necessary, be referred back to the tutor concerned. This is not of course a new role for the library, but it is highlighted in the case of students who have limited contact with tutors and fellow students. It must be said that in the organisation of FlexiStudy every effort has been made to provide tutorial contact as the need arises. Tutors may be contacted by telephone at the College, the issuing of private numbers being left to the choice of the individual tutor, and regular surgery times offered.

There has been constant reference to contact with FlexiStudy tutors. Liaison here is very important as the tutors, being in direct contact with the students, can do much to publicise the library services and encourage students to make the fullest use of them.

We have at Barnet College been successful in adapting to the needs of FlexiStudy students from the point of view of a flexible approach to library procedures, allowing these students a freedom not given to students who attend college on a regular basis. The issue of postal loans has not arisen, although this is a point for consideration. While I consider extended opening hours to be a very important factor if a library service is truly to serve the needs of all students who require access to it, constraints on staffing resources and the needs of all students prevent any expansion here. Vacation 'office hours' opening is better than nothing, but of little use to the working student. Weekend opening would, I feel, encourage a greater use of the Library. The presence of at least one professional librarian on duty at all times during opening hours is essential to the fullest use of resources.

User education is to my mind the most crucial factor, for this provides students with a sound knowledge of the services which libraries offer and the confidence and ability to use any library. This view is supported in College Libraries: Guidelines for Professional Service and Resource Provision (Library Association 1982) where it is stated, "User education, teaching students to use libraries, their resources and the literature of their subject, to provide them with a life long skill, is one of the professional librarian's most important duties", and, "As emphasis on student-based learning increases, the demand and need for user education will grow". For part-time students in particular I would suggest an emphasis on the use the public library system since this will form the greater part of their contact with libraries. But as has already been said, it is difficult to meet FlexiStudy students as a group and to timetable user education sessions. It is also difficult to convey as much information in a casual enquiry situation as in a structured session. Tape/slide, audio cassette, video or printed programmes can assist user education, but cannot replace the personal contact between the librarian and the student.

Individual tuition is a time-consuming and highly staff-intensive practice. Here I think hinges the whole problem of student-based learning and the college library, the need for increased numbers of professional staff to meet the increasing demands from individuals for assistance as well as those of groups. The Guidelines also make the point that, "Many colleges are currently developing independent learning, open learning and distance learning schemes. If such schemes are to operate successfully there must be a major input of library staff time to ensure the proper development and organisation of source materials in order that the student can readily make use of them", and that "... No college may properly and conscientiously make any deliberate move towards more student-based learning without making additional resources available to it ..."

However, I would like to conclude on a more positive note. I am wholly in support of any moves towards open learning, the more open the better! Some colleagues, lecturers and librarians, have approached open learning in much the same way as they approached audio-visual materials, fearful of the implications, not liking the idea of radical change and the disruption of comfortable and familiar routines. Many of our colleges are fighting to retain the levels of existing resources and the hope of any additional resources in the near future would seem doomed. As professional librarians we cannot turn our backs on a new vital development in education whatever our resource problems. It is possible to do something. I would like to encourage librarians to meet open learning with open minds and to respond as far as possible to the needs of these students while continuing to press the case for additional resources. There is a place, in my view, for a partnership of college librarians as well as tutors and learning materials providers in the Open Learning Federation. Should an open learning network be achieved, libraries will have a key role to play.

Postscript

Within a few weeks of the presentation of this paper Barnet College put forward proposals for the regrading of its Library Services. In the documentation of these proposals, The Guidelines (Library Association, 1982) and the NATFHE Policy Statement 'College Libraries' (National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education 1982) were cited as major influences. The Library Services' participation in and contribution to educational developments such as Open Learning and BEC/TEC were emphasised. In addition to promotions, a new tutor librarian (now in post) and a non-teaching professional librarian were recommended. The teaching post promotions and new post have been achieved by the willingness of the College to reallocate existing resources to the Library Services. It is too early as yet to amend comments on inadequate resources in the main body of this paper, but it is hoped that it will now be possible to offer an improved service to part-time students and certainly to extend the user education programme.

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THE OPEN COLLEGE STUDENT AND THE LIBRARY

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The Open College provides a route for mature students with no formal educational qualifications to go on to further and higher education. This paper looks at how the library at Nelson and Colne College provides for these adult learners. User education, especially within the study skills courses which students attend, stresses the availability of other library resources as well as those of the College Library.

For those who are not familiar with the Open College scheme let me first of all outline its aims and operation. Open College has grown from an iniital 53 students in April 1976 to over 1,000 students in September 1981 and has expanded from Nelson and Colne College to be offered as an alternative to 'A' levels at ten colleges in the North West.

The key phrase is 'an alternative to 'A' levels' because this indicates the type of adult student for whom the courses are intended. Nearly half of Open College students left school at the age of 15 or under, all have their own different reasons for wanting to take the course and most are apprehensive about their own academic ability, often reinforced by past failures. The course is intended to be more appropriate to adults than the 'O' and 'A' level courses which tend to be examination orientated and formal. The Open College student starts the course on stage 'A' units, usually beginning with either the 'Study Techniques' or 'Methods of Enquiry', then can progress to the more advanced state 'B' units. The full course consists of three stage 'A' units, of 50 hours each, and two stage 'B' units of 100 hours each. The student may choose to take just one unit out of interest and not take the examination; take a break between units; or use the course to prepare themselves for Open University.

The library contact begins during the 'Study Techniques' or 'Methods of Enquiry' unit and is not limited to the use of the College Library but is intended to illustrate the back-up facilities of the inter-library loans service and public library. This part of the course also deals with the wider problems of information dissemination and how they affect industry, education and the individual. To most students the scope of libraries and information agencies is a revelation. Their previous contact has usually been through brief encounters with the public library, if at all, or other part-time courses in which the library element was minimal.

The demands put on the library services are, in some cases, quite heavy. The adult student is at college by choice, is usually highly motivated, whether through interest or ambition and may have several diverse interests other than the course which he is studying. In a recent survey of inter-library loans one student had requested books on fitness, yoga, philosophy, sport, child psychology, witchcraft, astral projection, biography and Sanskrit in addition to several books per week from our own stock. This is, perhaps, an extreme example of reading habits but it serves to illustrate the pressures put on a service by the adult student; pressures which may have been transferred from the public library to the college because of the regular contact and convenience.

Although most study problems are dealt with as part of the course it is inevitable that some students will have more difficulty than others in finding their way around the library and may be reticent in approaching a member of staff.

It is important, therefore, to instruct staff to take particular care in looking out for students who appear to be having problems. Where possible it is the same member of staff who is on duty for the evening of the same class so that a relationship can be built up. Early contact is ensured by the administering of course books by the library so the student becomes accustomed to asking the library staff for books and information.

It is not possible to make any assumptions when dealing with adult students. The younger students although they would deny it, tend to be predictable, or at least take on a group profile. The adult student, however, may have just completed an adult literacy course, have undergone advanced level study previously or have a wealth of experience through his career. After two hours teaching such a group it is possible to have learned more than you have taught. The mature student, during discussion groups tends to be able to contribute a great deal to the groups as a whole because it is possible to relate any theoretical problems to situations which actually occur.

It is easy to forget that students, far from wanting to be surrounded by books, may be discouraged by their family or friends for appearing to be 'intellectual' or 'stuck up'. These barriers are best broken down by the library seeming a normal place to be, a workshop and a friendly place which everyone may use. The attitude of the teaching staff can go a long way to achieving this (Percy et al 1980).

At Nelson and Colne College we are starting long-term research into the effect of intensive library tuition and back-up on Open College students. We will look at the extent of use made by students and whether the library tuition programme has any effect on the attainment of the students objectives. It is important not to simply look at results because many Open College students do not join the course to obtain a qualification and may have reasons for joining the course other than academic ones.

Open College students are attending college for a relatively short period which may be interrupted. In order to further the aims of the all libraries it is important to sell the idea of using them, not just for a specific purpose but in general. To this end, students must be made aware of the services available from public libraries, museums and special collections as well as the college library if we are to prepare them for all types of study. There appears to be a distinct division between studying and not studying. This division can, to some extent, be blurred by educating the student into thinking that learning from any source is a form of study and can be pursued along lines which the student wishes to follow.

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PART-TIME STUDENTS AND THEIR NEED FOR LIBRARY SERVICES

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At least six million people in the UK receive some form of part-time education or training each year. This paper examines the size of different sub-sections of this group, their need for library services, library provision available to them, the costs of providing it, and the barriers to use. Particular attention is paid to the problems of external students who require the use of research collections.

1. THE NEED FOR SERVICES

Six million people in the UK receive some form of part-time education or training each year. ("Adult and continuing: an 'Education' Digest" 1981). Some of them wish to use libraries and the cost of serving them is not inconsiderable. They face difficulties in using libraries and need help to overcome them. It is possible to estimate the magnitude of the problems involved and to identify the ways in which they may be alleviated.

Part-time students in higher education form the group which is most likely to demand intensive library services, and so it is necessary to examine in most detail the difficulties encountered in serving them.

2. THE SIX MILLION

The six million people represent some 11% of the UK population. They study at a variety of levels and take courses originated by a number of groups of organisations. ("Adult and continuing: an 'Education' Digest" 1981).

Groups	People taking courses
Adult education centres	2,005,000
Special responsible bodies for the provision of education for adults. (University extra-mural, WEA, Welsh National Council of YMCAs)	280,000
Residential colleges and centres of adult education	88,000
Local Education Authority further and adult education establishments	3,200,000
Voluntary organisations (e.g. Women's Institutes, Towns-women's Guilds, Co-operative Union)	c.1,000,000
Vocational training	c.2,600,000

These figures total more than six million, but some of the estimates are rather broad. Six million is a safe figure, though probably low.

3. LIBRARY USE

The groups may be examined to discover their probable demand for library services and the ways in which this may be met. Those students attached to organisations which provide libraries will be served primarily by them, and their need to use other libraries will be correspondingly smaller.

4. PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Students without such a link must look elsewhere for library services. Most of them use the public library, as adult students have done for well over a century. The services provided range from special book collections for adult literacy students to the records, archives and rare books used by postgraduate researchers in the large metropolitan public reference libraries.

5. LIGHT USE OF LIBRARY SERVICES

Large numbers of people taking vocational courses will carry out practical work unaccompanied by books. Others follow self-contained courses in which required reading is provided as reprographed handouts or other books directly supplied.

Many students take courses controlled by educationalists whose knowledge of the use of libraries and the literature of their subjects is weak. The blind lead the blind. Their students tend to use libraries only to obtain named titles which happen to be known to their instructors. This temporary release of students from direct tuition, to let them reach the library for an emasculated use of books, is known as independent study. The books themselves are referred to as teaching resources, to inhibit any seditious ideas of real independent study in libraries.

School librarians are gradually teaching students how to use libraries, but many schools still have no trained librarian and a sadly large proportion of students leave school unable to use libraries systmatically.

For all these reasons the demand placed upon public libraries in the UK by part-time students is likely to be relatively light. It may also be noted that some public library users may use the library less, rather than more, when they embark on part-time courses. For example, Open University students spend around fourteen hours a week on their course materials. This time is no longer available for general reading and can result in fewer books being demanded from libraries.

With these factors in mind, an estimate of the cost of serving part-time students may be made:

Cost of public libraries 1980-1981 (Municipal Yearbook and Public Services Directory 1982)	£234,000,000	
Membership (about one third of the UK population)	19,000.000	
Cost per person		£12.30
Cost per person (December 1981 prices)		£13.80
Noting that less than half the total number of part-time students are likely to use libraries and that those that do are unlikely to cost more than double the average cost per person: The cost per part-time student is less than		£12.00

6. OTHER LIBRARIES

Other kinds of library - college, polytechnic, university, special and national - also help part-time students in varying degree. Many of them generously make their services available to students outside their parent organisations, even though they may not be funded to do so. Gratitude is due to their parent organisations for permitting this to be done.

7. HIGHER EDUCATION

Part-time students engaged in higher education are the ones most likely to demand large amounts of library services. Their numbers may be compared with those of full-time students. 1980 figures are available (Central Statistical Office 1981, p. 54).

Full-time students in higher education in UK (0.9% of the UK population)	524,000
Part-time students (0.5% of the UK population)	
Universities	32,000
Open University	69,000
OU short courses	14,000
Further education advanced courses	
Day	125,000
Evening	46,000
	286,000

It is known that many of the part-time students make only light demands on libraries. For example, Open University students taking self-contained courses, with no reading outside the printed course materials and purchased set books, are not required to use libraries at all. They may decide to read outside their set work, but few do so, and the public library service has shown itself well able to meet their demands.

A small proportion of Open University students need the services of academic libraries in addition to those of public libraries, and these have been identified over the last decade.

There are many similarities between Open University students and the other students tabulated above. Bearing this in mind, the pattern of external use of academic libraries may be examined.

8. THE EXTERNAL USERS OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

There are several groups of external users. The graduates of universities, as members of those universities, often retain reference and borrowing privileges in their libraries. This tradition is particularly strong in Scotland. These arrangements are usually of long standing, and the libraries have long ago learned to live with the demand involved, though the services provided are none the less expensive for being old established.

These people, together with others admitted under existing regulations, can reach about 30% of the total registered readers in a university library. For example, according to recent annual reports, Glasgow has 34% and the Bodleian 33%. Leicester has 22%, Southampton 10% and Aston 2%.

Ten to fifteen percent would be a reasonable average to have in mind, and would give a figure of around 35,000 to 50,000 external registered readers in Great Britain.

If a similar figure is assumed for polytechnic and other college libraries, that would make a total of about 70,000 to 100,000 external readers.

How many Open University students are among the 70,000 to 100,000 people already mentioned?

Within the Open University, two main groups of people may have a special need to use academic libraries.

Firstly, the part-time postgraduate students. There are about 500 of these. Secondly, the undergraduate students taking courses which involve project work. About 4,000 students registered for these courses in 1980 and about 2,500 of them took the final examinations. This makes a total of 3,000 Open University students who might wish to use an academic library.

But many Open University postgraduate students already have previous affiliation with other universities and so already have library membership privileges. Some of the undergraduate project work involves design or technical experiments, rather than literary research, and so does not lead to intensive library use.

Independent students unattached to academic institutions are an unknown quantity, but it is unlikely that they have suddenly increased in number over the last five years or so. They are already among the existing external users of academic libraries.

Few part-time external students are intensive library users over prolonged periods. There are many other demands on their time. They are not likely to spend more than about 12 to 16 hours per week on academic work, and only a part of that time will be spent in libraries.

This may be expressed in terms of full-time student equivalents. In the Open University it is usually reckoned that, due to limited time for study, a part-time student will make about one third of the demand on academic libraries that a full-time student would make. That would give the 3,000 Open University students who may use academic libraries a full-time student equivalent of 1,000. It may also be noted that many of the external library users may go for periods of months or even years without using academic libraries at all. Pressure of their other activities means that their studies have to be deferred.

Services to external users cannot be provided without devoting library staff time and other resources to them. It is sometimes forgotten that academic libraries are providing this service, without any special funding, at a time of financial restriction.

One can only be grateful that the provision is made, and wonder how long it can continue.

9. THE COST OF SERVICES

The average cost of serving academic library users can be estimated. University figures are most easily to hand and provide a basis for the estimate.

The figures for 1979-1980 are available (Whitakers Almanack 1981, pp 366-7):

Recurrent grant through the University Grants Committee to universities in the UK	£987,000,000
That was around 75% of their total income Total	£1,316,000,000
Library expenditure as a percentage of total university expenditure was about	4.5%
Occupancy charges increase this 20%, making	5.4%
Total library expenditure	£71,000,000

To arrive at the average cost per user a ratio of costs determined by SCONUL is used (University Grants Committee 1967, pp. 264-275)

Taking the cost of serving an undergraduate as	1 unit
The cost of serving a postgraduate student or a member of teaching or research staff is	7.5 units
The universities' teaching and research staff numbered	41,000
Postgraduate students	48,000
Undergraduate students	244,000

Full-time equivalent of part-time degree and diploma, extra-mural and continuing education students ("Universities: the costs spelt out" 1981)	43,000

Applying the ratio to the figures above gives:

Staff	307,000 units
Postgraduate students	360,000 units
Undergraduate students	244,000 units
Full-time equivalent of part-time students	43,000 units
Total	954,000 units

Dividing the total library expenditure by the total number of units gives a unit cost of	£74.42
Thus the cost of library service for a university undergraduate student was about	£74.00
The cost of library service for a postgraduate student or a member of university staff was about	£558.00

From those figures the cost of serving external part-time students may be found. It is usual to estimate that an Open University student can spend about one third of the time per week in study that a full-time student spends. Accordingly, his demand on libraries is likely also to be around one third, but this demand is spread over a longer period.

The average annual cost of university library service to a part-time external undergraduate student was about	£25.00
The average annual cost of service to a part-time external postgraduate student was about	£190.00

Inflation brought these figures to about £28 and £213 respectively by the end of 1981.

How much should libraries charge for such service to external students? Each university is autonomous and decides its own scale of charges. Circumstances differ and a flat rate would be neither possible nor desirable. It is to be hoped that the universities can still be as generous as they have been in the past, but the financial situation will make things difficult.

10. THE DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED BY USERS OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Part-time students in higher education commonly use a combination of public, academic and other libraries. Their needs may be considered at two levels:

- Those following formal courses who need only the basic library services.

- Those engaged in research who need access to special collections and other special services.

a) Students following a formal course during a fixed period of time may be required to use a specific book during that course, either as a set book or for brief use during the course. They either buy or borrow the book. If they try to borrow the book they usually need to get it with a minimum of delay. They may need the book at a fixed point in their course and it may be useless to them if it arrives afterwards. OU students find that they have two problems:

   i) The course materials do not always warn students in advance that a certain book is needed on a certain date. This is sometimes unavoidable, due to the tight scheduling of a course in its first year of presentation.

   ii) If a public library does not have the required book available on the shelves in the building where students ask for it there will be a delay in obtaining it.

   The book may be on loan to another reader and must be retrieved.

   The book may be on the shelves in another building managed by the same public library authority.

   The book may not be in the stock of that public library authority and has to be bought, or borrowed from another library through the inter-library loan system, if it is to be made available. The delay may vary from days to weeks or even months.

   The problem may be relieved if the students have access to other libraries. A book which the public library may obtain for loan only after some weeks may be available for reference in a local college, polytechnic or university library. This may solve the problem if students are granted access to the library and if they have time to use the book within the library. Here is an obvious snag. Many OU students in full-time employment cannot take time off and make a journey to use the book within a library. They need to be able to borrow the book so that they can use it at home during the limited time they can allot to their study. This difficulty cannot easily be resolved, as the non-public libraries' first duty is to their own institutions. General granting of borrowing rights to adult students would tax their limited resources to the detriment of readers within their own organisations.

The problem would be eased if public libraries made available a rapid inter-library loan service in addition to the service mentioned above. It would be expensive and there might be a case for levying a charge relative to its high cost. Such a policy would be contentious, as is the policy of charging users for computer based literature searches.

b) Students engaged in research have similar problems, but more so. To illustrate these, evidence has been drawn from a survey carried out in 1979 by Betty Swift, a Research Fellow of the Open University. The results were issued internally in June 1981 but have not yet been published (Swift 1981).

576 postgraduate students were approached and 271, or 47%, responded to the survey. The picture is fairly cheerful, and none of it is surprising. The students commented upon public libraries.

42% of the external part-time students said that public libraries were very adequate or fairly adequate for their needs

58% of arts students thought so.

57% of social science students thought so, but less than 30% of science and technology students did, and no mathematics students at all.

The students used more than one library.

85% found their total arrangements adequate.

They named the main library they used -

85% named university libraries
23% public libraries
7% college libraries
6% industrial libraries
4% polytechnic libraries, and
13% other libraries, including those of research institutes and professional associations

The part-time external students reported eleven chief types of difficulties in using libraries. They are ranked below.

1.	Much time spent in travelling to and from the library, compared with the time spent in the library	42%
2.	Inter-library loan delays	35%
3.	High travel costs	24%
	Library opening hours inconvenient	24%
	Difficulty in obtaining borrowing privileges	24%
4.	Difficulty caused by the time taken to get reserve stock	17%

5.	Photocopying problems	16%
	Trouble with interlibrary loan facilities	16%
6.	Difficulty in getting access to record offices	6%
7.	Difficulty in obtaining reading privileges	4%
	Trouble in obtaining computer based literature search facilities	4%

Other little local difficulties included: some archives and other collections uncatalogued; books wanted not in the United Kingdom. And one student said that there was 'very little recorded information on the subject being studied'.

11. HELP IN USING ACADEMIC LIBRARIES FOR EXTERNAL READERS

Many undergraduate students use libraries only to get the books they have been told to read. In the Open University it has been reported that "most students will do little or no reading outside their course even at higher levels" (Bulkeley 1981, p.2). It is not that Open University students have anything against libraries in particular. Some of them do not read all the set books for their courses and some omit the radio and television programmes entirely. In this, Open University undergraduates, in common with undergraduates anywhere, are like most other people. They demonstrate the principle of minimum effort, and avoid unnecessary work.

By contrast, research students, and other people wishing to pursue scholarly interests, do need to use libraries. They often need advice on their proposed research and the library resources which it will require. Many questions must be resolved. Is the proposed research practicable? Does a literature of the subject exist to be studied? Is the literature held in a library within reasonable travelling distance of the student? Can the student visit the library during its opening hours? Is the library able to grant access to the student? Has the student time to spare for travelling? Is the cost of travel acceptable? Proper consideration of such points before the subject of research is finally determined can save many problems and difficulties later.

The 1981 Census preliminary report has shown how the population is moving away from the cities. This leads to greater distances for students to travel to academic libraries. The time and cost of these longer journeys are becoming increasingly serious problems and the reduction in public transport is making the problem worse. More students may have to reject a research subject which would require frequent visits to a distant library, because of the time and cost involved.

These and other problems will make counselling for students embarking on postgraduate research more and more necessary. Counselling as a prelude to study is offered to some adult students by the Educational Advisory Services, usually run by local education authorities.

More than thirty of these are listed in the Directory of educational guidance services for adults (Educational Advisory Services Project 1982) but they do not fully cover the problems of advanced students who will need the services of academic libraries.

12. HELPING STUDENTS TO USE LIBRARIES SYSTEMATICALLY

Research students have to acquire new skills. They must explore the literature of their subject for themselves. They need to know how to use libraries effectively without wasting their time poking around aimlessly. The must know how to use the catalogues, indexes, bibliographies, etc., and they must be familiar with the bibliographical control apparatus of their subject. If they do not know these things they need to be taught.

They have four main needs:

i) They need a guide to the bibliographical control apparatus of their subjects and the method of conducting a literature search.

ii) They need to be shown how to use their time in libraries to the best advantage. For example, the simple parts of a literature search may be done in local libraries. Then only the more advanced parts of the search have to be done in large libraries, which may be several hours' journey away and visited only occasionally.

iii) They need a guide to the libraries, record offices and other resources in their locality, showing hours of opening and the names of people to contact within them.

iv) They need access to these local resources and they need to know how to request permission to use them.

In the Open University the Library deals with the first two problems and the Regional Offices cover the second two. The Library concentrates on the subject approach. The Liaison Librarians have written over forty guides to the use of the literature and library resources of various subjects. The guides stress a systematic approach to the literature and to other sources of information. They can be used in any region of the United Kingdom.

The thirteen Regional Offices concentrate on the resources of libraries in their areas. They examine the available services and collections relevant to subjects covered by courses and research in the University. Their work is co-ordinated by a Regional Library Liaison Officer, or Adviser, in each Regional Office. Seminars for students have been held in record offices and libraries, and directories of the libraries in every Region have been made available.

Tutors, Regional Library Liaison Officers and other regional staff have discussed with librarians the problems of library services for students. The seminars and discussions have an advantage for librarians. They offer the chance to tell students how to use libraries effectively and how to avoid making unreasonable demands. Much remains to be done, and the University still irritates librarians occasionally. But libraries have a tradition of being kind to external readers and Open University students have benefitted from this. The debt of gratitude is great.

External readers attached to other educational institutions may receive similar help from their tutors (always assuming that the tutors know how to help), but independent researchers also need help.

Public reference librarians have always provided this. They know the local public library resources and can show researchers how to use those first, before moving on to academic libraries. They can warn students not to pick research topics which have an inaccessible or non-existent literature and advise how to approach other libraries in the area. They can help to dissuade people who want a reader's ticket in an academic library as a status symbol, rather than because of any real need. In short, they can help external readers to use academic and other libraries with the greatest benefit to themselves and the least disruption to academic libraries.

The long term solution to the problem is to teach students how to conduct scholarly research and how to use libraries effectively. But is the long term. The eleven difficulties of students mentioned earlier will be with us for many years, and librarians have many other difficulties of their own. The costs will not go away either, and it may be that students will have to bear part of the high cost of the library servies they need. The next few years will be interesting for all concerned.

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EXTERNAL STUDENTS:

COMMON PROBLEMS IN LIBRARY RESOURCES

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This paper deals with the library needs of external and extramural students. The main problems encountered in providing an off-campus service are outlined, and the basic requirements for an effective service are suggested. Some examples of current practice in this country and abroad are briefly described. The importance of institutional responsibility, and the need for further attention to be given to the question, are stressed.

I am concerned here with adult students who are pursuing a formal part-time course of academic study, but whose studies are either home-based or involve regular attendance at a class at some distance from the campus of the parent institution. This therefore covers extramural classes and external degrees offered "off-campus" by colleges and universities. External, off-campus students are at a double disadvantage: not only are they part-time but also they are denied easy access to the main library of their institution, because of time or distance or eligibility. Special arrangements have to be made, or should be made, to provide them with a library service. My aim is to identify any common problems which may exist in trying to provide a library service to students within this range of activity. In doing this I have in mind not only the situation in this country, but also that in the USA and Australia.

One problem is that external students have for some time been regarded as being, almost by definition, marginal to the main function of a college or university, and, as a result, library services to support these students have often been regarded (sometimes by librarians) as unimportant. In some cases these attitudes are justifiable. Examples come to mind of leisure-or recreational -type courses involving a minimum of mental activity on the part of the students, or of self-contained course packages which do not require a student to make any use of libraries. But attitudes are now changing. As institutions of higher education turn more to the adult population, seeing both an educational need and a source of income, and have to give a better account of themselves to the community at large, continuing education is becoming more respectable. And much of continuing education involves extending the resources and expertise of the university to those members of the community who are able and willing to benefit from them. This includes library services, but there is little sign yet that academic librarians in this country are thinking of the new patterns of service which will be required for off-campus study.

Perhaps one reason for the small amount of attention paid to academic library "outreach" services is the difficulty of defining students' needs and of deciding the kind of services required. This is the second major problem. Students' needs vary considerably even within this apparently limited range of activity. If we look at what is already being done both here and abroad we shall find that there are a large number of variables in external work, and that it is those which are predominant which determine the nature of the off-campus library services of any particular institution.

The most important factors likely to be relevant in deciding the kind of service needed, may be summarized as follows:

1. Course structures and methods of teaching

   Courses may lead to a qualification (degree, diploma, etc.) or they may be non-examinable; they may be a "repeat" of on-campus courses or they may be a totally different offering; they may be taught by internal staff or by part-time tutors, or a combination of both; they may be highly structured with the emphasis on a series of self-contained learning packages or course units, or they may be based on self-directed study with the student largely determining his or her own curriculum; they may be taught by correspondence or through the use of mass media and telecommunications, or through regular classes and face-to-face tuition. The library needs of students will vary accordingly.

2. Course curricula

The range and nature of the subjects being studied. At one extreme there are some courses (especially in the humanities and social sciences) whose viability depends on students' reading certain texts. At the other extreme some vocational or practical subjects may require no reading at all. Research-based courses, (e.g. local history projects), require access to primary sources. In "linear" subjects, such as modern languages or mathematics, it may not be necessary for students to go much beyond their basic textbooks.

3. The geographical situation of individual students

Some students may live in isolated communities, perhaps without easy access to any library at all or at best with access only to an inadequate public library. Students living in or near the same city as the parent institution may for genuine reasons find it difficult to get to the campus to use its library (assuming they are entitled to do so) and may have to turn to suburban libraries nearer where they live.

4. The work situation of students

The majority of adult students have either full-time jobs or heavy domestic responsibilities (often both) and are busy people with limited "spare" time. The fact that they are undertaking a course of study at all usually indicates that they are strongly motivated. Studying part-time and at a distance is not easy; we should not dampen students' enthusiasm or make their opportunities for effective study even more difficult by failing to provide the resources they need. For these reasons an important element in the library service which supports them should be accessibility and speed of delivery. The aim should be to reduce to a minimum the amount of time which students have to spend in locating and obtaining the items (or the information) they need.

5. The location of off-campus classes

Finding suitable accommodation for extramural classes is a perennial problem. Many different kinds of locations are used, ranging from purpose-built adult education centres to village halls and schools. In most cases students do not have access to a library at the meeting place.

With all these possible variables, then, the main reason why library support for extension studies is still failing to receive its due attention may be that it is not known how a service can best be provided in any particular situation. Of course, another major problem is finance. But this is linked again with the question of attitudes and institutional responsibility. Often money has not been found for off-campus services because of a lack of clearly defined responsibility. Clearly the college or university offering a course should be ultimately responsible; but even this has not always been accepted, and too often students are left to fend entirely for themselves.

But once the parent institution accepts responsibility, should the service come under the chief librarian, or should it come under the extension division and a continuing education librarian?

Having outlined some the main factors relevant to off-campus study, is it possible to isolate the basic requirements for providing an effective library service? The overall purpose of library services in this context may be stated to be: To make available at the right time the materials and information needed for a proper pursuit of the subject being studied. Availability implies either (i) direct access to a library holding the materials or (ii) direct access to a librarian or communications system through which materials may be obtained in time for when they are needed. Within this purpose may be included: to guide students to local resources other than those of the parent institution, and to train students how to use libraries in general.

On this basis I suggest the following basic requirements for an effective service:

a) Small collections of books located in or near the classroom for the duration of the courses, each collection based on the tutor's book-list for the course.

b) A small collection of reference books located near the classroom, or near where the student lives (e.g. in a local library) for finding out what has been published on particular subjects.

c) Timely access to the main library, or a branch library, or to the extension library, of the parent institution, (in person, by telephone or by mail) for requesting and obtaining required materials and information.

d) Easy access to a local library (i.e. near to where a student lives or works), not that of the parent institution, from which a student may borrow.

It is unlikely that all these requirements will be necessary in all situations. For degree-level work b) and c) are likely to the most important; while it will be a) for traditional adult education classes. But underlying all operations is the problem of timing. Librarians have to anticipate demands and, as far as possible, have materials ready in advance. Keeping to deadlines is particularly important in off-campus work. The service has to be flexible enough in its operations to be able to deal quickly with sudden and urgent requests to make allowances for "external" factors such as expensive transport arrangements and postal delays.

After these generalisations it may now be helpful to give examples of some existing off-campus library services, with a brief note of their main features.

Most university extramural departments in this country have their own library (normally independent, i.e. not a part of the university library system) existing solely to serve the needs of extramural students and tutors. The usual method of provision is by special class collections (book-boxes) delivered to the meeting-places and retained for the duration of the classes. For example, my own library now has 100,000 items in stock and supplies about 20,000 each year to about 500 classes; it supplements this by the provision of audio-visual materials for tutors. Special features of these libraries are multiple copies of books (and other materials such as music scores and maps). Successful operations (especially on-time delivery) depend on close collaboration between the library, teaching, and administrative staff. Library instruction for students is virtually impossible because of the scale of operations (e.g. about 14,000 enrolments each year at Birmingham). Some (the smaller) extramural departments do not have libraries, but make alternative arrangements. Kent County Library, for example, provides a service for the University of Kent's School of Continuing Education. The Library Association (1978) has issued standards for extramural libraries, but still only a small number of these libraries can be said to be adequate.

The Workers Educational Association (WEA) has no library of its own. There is a case for examining the feasibility of regional libraries serving all types of adult classes in an area. The nearest equivalent to this concept abroad is the Adult Education Library of New South Wales, which provides a (book-box) lending service to tutorial classes and discussion groups organised by the Australian WEA, the Department of Adult Education of the University of Sydney, and similar departments of other universities in the state. In 1979 it supplied 40,000 books to 880 classes.

Many American universities have extension divisions, offering both degree courses and non-credit courses. Some of these have separate extension libraries, some operate an off-campus service from their central university library, while some make no special provision at all. The extension libraries mostly operate a book-box service to off-campus classes, but some also operate branch libraries at extension centres and direct delivery to individual students. The best examples of these are the University of Wisconsin Extension Library Service, and the State University System of Florida Extension Library (serving the off-campus courses of all nine state universities). Where a service is operated from within a university main library, it is usually directed at individual students. One of the more sophisticated examples is to be seen at Central Michigan University, whose Institute for Personal and Career Development offers external degrees in several states and finances the library service to external students. In this system, students can request (by free telephone call) books and articles from the main library, and they have access to three regional librarians, who deal with reference questions, prepare bibliographies, give library instruction, and direct students to appropriate local resources.

Guidelines for institutions in the USA offering such services were published some years ago by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL 1967). These have recently been revised (ACRL, 1982).

In Australia two examples may be cited showing different patterns of provision. The University of Queensland has a separate external studies library; it serves 3,000 students living in Queensland and in other states, and all studying degrees by correspondence. Most borrowing is by mail, but there are also five branch libraries in off-campus centres. The University of New England operates an external service from its main library collection. Currently it has about 6,000 external degree students (about 70% of its total enrolment), studying by correspondence. All loans are by mail and there are no branch libraries. The Library Association of Australia's Special Interest Group on Distance Education has also compiled guidelines for these services. (Library Association of Australia 1982).

One reason for referring to developments abroad in this way is the resistance of most "conventional" universities in Britain to part-time first degrees. Where they are offered, it is usually through on-campus evening classes. There is therefore little or no "current practice" here to describe. In the University of London's external degree programme students are encouraged to use their local resources as fully as possible. A postal service is operated for them from the University of London Library, but this library does not acquire multiple copies of books required for courses and does not lend periodicals. Students therefore rely heavily on public libraries and inter-library loans. In the survey by Marsterson and Wilson (1975), the most frequent criticism voiced by London external students was of the inadequacy of the book-stock of the (mainly public) libraries being used; this, it was concluded, was because most of the students were using libraries not geared primarily to their needs.

The University of Hull's Department of Adult Education is one of the few to move strongly into part-time degrees. So far, most of the teaching for them has been (in the evenings and on Saturdays) on-campus, with some students travelling a considerable distance to attend. For these courses they are entitled to use the university library, although a major problem is that with three hours of teaching after a day's work they hardly have time to borrow books. But one degree course is now being offered in Grimsby, and for these classes book-boxes are being provided. There is no suggestion yet of a direct mailing or reference service for individual students.

I have not referred to the Open University, as in a sense the whole country is its campus. And its highly structured correspondence courses at the first and second levels present fewer library problems than do "conventional", more specialized, courses. But in spite of a complex back-up service, involving individual student counselling, study centres, summer schools, and literature guides, third and fourth level students encounter some problems relating to library use, such as travelling time, opening hours and getting access to academic libraries.

I am tempted to suggest that some of the difficulties will never disappear so long as there is no direct library service from the Open University to its own students.

One of the disadvantages from which many off-campus students are said to suffer is the lack of opportunity to browse in an academic library. Clearly students should be encouraged to choose their own material rather than confine their reading to what is allocated to them. Various methods have been suggested for this, such as the provision of library catalogues on microfiche, and photocopies of content lists of books and journals. The main problem, I believe, is getting as many students as possible to the campus as often as possible.

In the end it is the responsibility of the institution offering the courses to ensure that its external students receive a library service which is, as far as possible, on a par with internal services. This involves a regular financial allocation and the assignment of the specific responsibility to a member of the professional library staff. Needs will vary, as I have tried to show, but a service will be adequate only if it is geared to the particular needs of the students concerned. We should now anticipate future trends in higher and further education and give more attention to this question.

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LIBRARY PROVISION FOR THE ADULT PART-TIME LEARNER

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This paper reports on two separate but related small research projects undertaken in the course of work - as a part-time research student - with the Department of Library and Information Studies at Loughborough University. The first project is a survey of library and book use of evening class students at an East Midlands adult education centre (which, in the wider study, is part of a survey of current library provision for adult learners). The second is a set of "selected highlights" of a Delphi study on the future relationship of libraries and adult learning.

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1. ADULT EVENING CLASS STUDENTS

Background and method

Questionnaires were distributed, through the good offices of the adult education area principal, to students at all LEA and WEA evening classes at one adult education centre in the East Midlands, during the Spring Term of 1980, and through the WEA branch secretary to the remaining WEA classes being held at that time. In all, 136 responses were received from 17 LEA and all 5 WEA classes. The number of students actively attending at the time is hard to define, but 136 would appear to represent between one quarter and one third, approximately, of the students circulated.

If we use Mee and Wiltshire's (1978) fourfold broad division of adult class subjects (1 - craft and aesthetic skills; 2 - physical skills; 3 - cognitive and intellectual skills; 4 - courses for disadvantaged groups) we find that 7 of the classes from which responses were obtained fall into category 1; 3 into category 2; 11 into category 3; and 1 into category 4. By numbers of students: 26 category 1; 22 category 2; 84 category 3; 4 category 4. Compared with the national pattern found by Mee and Wiltshire, this considerably over-represents the cognitive and intellectual skills, largely because all five WEA classes (38 students) fall within that category. Since this is also the area of study for which library and book use had the most obvious relevance and traditional recognition one must expect that a fully representative national survey would come up with findings less flattering to libraries and librarians than those detailed here.

Findings

a) Information about classes (see Table 1)

Libraries figured clearly but unimpressively among sources of information about the classes which students were attending.

Participants were asked:

"People find out about adult classes in many ways - through the local papers, the public library, from friends, for instance. How did you come to know of the class you are attending?"

In the area served by the adult education centre a door-to-door newssheet of adult education opportunities was long-established, and the large proportion of respondents who obtained their information from that source is perhaps not surprising. The relatively high figure for the local paper may also include some people who actually meant the adult education newssheet. Personal contacts are clearly quite important, again unsurprisingly in the informal hinterland of adult education, whilst libraries make up less than one in ten of references to sources.

Given the existence of the newssheet the importance of the library may be underplayed in this particular survey, but the picture is really one of only partly fulfilled potential. Librarians certainly see educational information as one of the Library's roles vis-a-vis adult learners, as Allred and Hay (1979) have shown, and it is pleasing to find this view of the library's potential confirmed by student use. But the level of that use is scarcely high enough in this survey to suggest that the potential is being used to anywhere near capacity.

b) Study material (see Table 2)

Participants were asked:

"If you read about your subject of study, are the books, or magazines you use your own or borrowed (and if borrowed, from where? e.g. from friends, from a class collection, from the public library)".

94 of the 136 respondents had stated, in answer to another question, that they read books or magazines in the course of out-of-class study of their subject. The figures in Table 2 need to be taken in this context, therefore.

Some 45 students claimed to use a library to obtain material to support their studies. Only personal resources received greater use. 45 represents nearly half the students who used books or magazines, practically one third of the total sample and demonstrates a very significant level of use. Whilst Taylor and Johnson's (1973) survey of library use reveals very few readers coming to the public library, at least, with an educational purpose in mind, if we turn the perspective round and start with learners, it is clear that substantial numbers do in fact look to the public library for support (only one respondent mentioned using a non-public library, and that was at her place of work). Perhaps the numbers could be higher, though. 22 of the 28 who referred to their use of class collections were members of WEA classes provided with book boxes by the Extra-Mural Department Library of Nottingham University, the remaining six being LEA class students who made use of the small collection of books, provided by the centre's students' association. Questioning of tutors at the centre failed to reveal a single instance where the County Library's book box service for adult classes had been taken up. This despite the fact that County Library staff made regular inputs into local training courses for new adult education tutors and that an information sheet for tutors was distributed.

c) Satisfaction with library provision

How did those students who used the public library feel about its provision? They were asked if they found it "easy", "not bad" or "hard" to obtain information through the library on their subject of study. An undifferentiated question of this sort is of limited usefulness, but should at least help produce a picture of how the students feel about their local library. In fact more than half the respondents to this question indicated that they found it "easy" to obtain what they wanted, with rather more finding the process "not bad" than "hard. Complimentary comments concentrated on the helpfulness of staff, and to a lesser extent (and perhaps surprisingly) on the usefulness of the catalogue and the "reference system". Negative comments related mainly to the paucity of stock in particular subject areas. Whilst the possible reluctance of respondents to criticise other people must be borne in mind, these comments do seem to emphasise the importance of the personal relationship between librarian and client, particularly the purposive, but not necessarily technically or educational experienced client.

The data presented briefly here are not offered as proof of anything quantifiable. What they do, I believe, is to help us to get something of the "feel" of being a non-librarian adult part-time student and of the role of the library as seen from that situation.

Clearly in many cases being an evening class student does not entail studying. When it does, the approach to study is probably fairly unsystematic and experience-related unless specifically guided. Thus personal collections and the books of friends - and the class collection, if provided - form the first resort; in part they are already known, and if not known, they are readily accessible. It is perhaps worth noting, although the point is a tentative one as it refers to only a handful of respondents, that the only class from which all participating students claimed to use the library as part of their studies was taught by the only tutor interviewed who took his active interest in the resourcing of his students' studies to the point of occasionally accompanying a student to the library and giving help with locating material.

If the findings of this study are at all representative, then libraries, specifically public libraries, are major suppliers of information about adult education and of resources for adult learners - but even more striking is the potential for growth.

2. LIBRARIES AND ADULT LEARNING IN THE FUTURE

Background and method

This report covers only part of the Delphi study. A list of librarians and adult educators was drawn up at the beginning of the study and each person on the list invited to set down developments in or affecting the relationship between librarians and adult learning which they felt were likely to occur. The responses to this invitation were consolidated into a list of 108 predictions, which were then circulated to participants with the request that they assign dates to the realisation of the predictions, or express disagreement with them. In a third round, responses to this request were circulated, and participants invited to reconsider their own predictions if they wished. This report attempts to cover only a few of 108 forecasts, those selected being some of the most significant, and some of those about which there was the most agreement. A fuller analysis will be found in the report of the research project as a whole (Drodge 1982). Twenty-two respondents (fifteen librarians and seven adult educators) completed the second and third rounds of the study.

Findings

Respondents generally felt that adult learning was an expanding facet of our social life. Encouragingly perhaps, a suggestion that librarians would fail to respond to this trend met with almost total disagreement. Similarly, there was a confidence that developing information technology would perform a major service for adult learners and that at least part of that service could involve libraries. Again a suggestion that home learning by teletext could oust libraries in this area was overwhelmingly dismissed, whilst the median date for the first few libraries to have acquired a major adult learning role through their information technology facilities was 1987, with this level of attainment being expected to be widespread by 1996 and almost universal by the end of this century (though nearly one third of respondents did not expect more than localised developments). Computer assisted learning in libraries was a widely predicted development, with a median date of 1988 for its localised provision. Support for this prediction, however, falls away markedly from round two to round three, so that the expectation that this type of service would ever by more than localised becomes decidedly a minority view.

The provision of less exotic forms of stock for the use of adult learners was, unsurprisingly, widely anticipated, and there was near unanimity on the likelihood of public libraries and adult education services combining to produce home learning packs in at least some areas (median forecast 1985).

There was good support, too, for this activity becoming general by the end of the century - but also a higher level of scepticism, though sceptics remained in the minority. A similar pattern of views emerged on the possibility of public libraries co-operating with agencies of the labour movement in the production of learning materials, though with a markedly higher level of outright disagreement.

To use such facilities it is necessary to have access to the library. The study mainly revolves around public libraries, the local centres for most people. Few, though, would suggest that academic library resources could not be of value to non-institutional adult learners as well as to a given institution's own registered students, full or part-time. A good majority, though by no means all of the respondents, felt that some academic libraries could be expected to open their doors to all-comers, and the median predicted date for about 5% of academic libraries to be doing this was 1989. Only about half the participants expected such a trend to become widespread, and a majority thought it would never become the norm (and the median dates predicted by the more optimistic for either further extension were well into the future). The likelihood of university libraries admitting adult learners during the vacations was more widely admitted - though still by no means universally.

Personal services met with a mixed reception. User education in some public libraries was generally assumed (median date 1982); in a good many, still very widely (median date 1992); in nearly all public libraries, by a small majority (and with a median date of only 2002): support for this forecast strengthened significantly with the period of reflection between the second and third rounds. User education clearly relates especially, but not exclusively, to adult learners. Library-organised seminars and workshops of a more generally educational nature received support, but rather less certainly, with most respondents agreeing that the practice would become widespread, but not necessarily dominant.

A series of forecasts dealt with the role of library staff themselves, showing a developing engagement with adult learning, from doing what some librarians already do - acting as guides for independent study projects and producing reading lists in response to demands form adult learners - through the acquisition of specifically educational skills, the introduction of adult education training into the training of librarians, and the employment of adult educators in libraries, to the appearance of joint librarian/adult educator posts, joint training, and even complete merger of the two professions. Basically the level of disagreement increases with the closer identification of the two professions with each other, although, interestingly, the idea that librarians would have to develop the skills of an education/information counsellor received stronger support than, for instance, the preparation of requested courses of reading. Nevertheless, to generalise, participants were divided on the likelihood of the less radical forecasts reaching norm status, but they gave considerable support to the probability of localised, and to a lesser degree, fairly widespread developments of this type, i.e. of librarians helping with programmes and giving educational advice, or of libraries employing adult educators for this purpose.

The formalisation of such a process through training in librarianship split the panel down the middle, but nearly all those who thought it would happen at all also believed that adult education training for librarians would become standard - though not for a considerable time. Joint training of librarians and adult educators, and the amalgamation of the professions received very little support indeed. Overall it would seem that there is broad consensus on the general idea of increased library engagement with adult learners - on the part of public and academic libraries alike. On the whole, though, there is little suggestion that developments will spread throughout the service. Perhaps we might see the present patchiness of provision maintained, but with a higher level of provision than at present where it does appear.

As all this affects librarians, the more educationally-orientated role appears to gain a fair measure of acceptance, though it is clear that anything approaching full integration of librarians into the sphere of even informal adult education is seen very sceptically. Whilst an active role of this sort is almost certainly essential if libraries as institutions are to emphasise and promote the educational side of their work, the quality of advice and guidance given may be doubted if the respondents are correct in their assessment of the likelihood of adult education training finding a place in the syllabuses of the schools of librarianship. Nor is there any prediction of assistance to adult learners forming a part of librarians' in-service training. Yet the personal element, the learner's actual experience of dealing with a librarian in connection with a learning project is of the first importance: a badly handled encounter can prevent any useful co-operation from developing. The stress laid on training in the American Adult Independent Learning Project (and brought out in British accounts of it by Surridge and Bowen (1977) and Dale (1979)) reflects this.

Indeed, important though it is to get the system right, so that the learner can obtain the information required when it is required, it is every bit as important for librarians to sort out their individual approaches and strategies for working with adult part-time students. Here is an area with real scope for co-operation between librarians from different backgrounds. Just as college librarians have much to learn from their colleagues in the public library service about openness to, and involvement with the community - not just the traditional group of full-time students and enforced library users - so public libraries might do well to apply some of the academic librarians' well-tried techniques of guidance on information and information skills within the educational context.

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TABLE 1 SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON CLASS ATTENDED

	LEA Classes	WEA Classes	TOTAL
AE Newssheet	48	14	62
Local paper	24	6	30
Public library	13	1	14
Personal contact	22	6	28
Other	4	7	11

TABLE 2 SOURCES OF BOOKS AND MAGAZINES USED FOR STUDY

	LEA	WEA	TOTAL
Own	44	16	60
Friends	23	6	29
Class collection	6	22	28
Library	29	16	45
Other	3	0	3

Note: Both tables include multiple responses

A PRESTEL INPUT EXPERIMENT AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE USE OF THE LIBRARY BY THE PART-TIME STUDENT

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The findings of a Prestel input experiment by public libraries in Northern Ireland show that it is feasible for public and academic libraries to provide information on Prestel aimed at assisting part-time students in their use of libraries. It is important that librarians experiment with new practical applications for Prestel in an age when the significance of distance learning is likely to have an immense impact on educational institutions and libraries.

1 INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to:-

1.1 Describe the Northern Ireland Prestel input experiment

1.2 Briefly outline the nature of part-time students and their information needs

1.3 Suggest ways in which Prestel could assist part-time students in their use of public and academic libraries.

1.4 Comment briefly on the reactions of a select number of part-time students and educators to the suggestions

1.5 Comment briefly on the feasibility of implementing the suggestions

The paper does not aim to discuss the role of Prestel as a learning device or as a means of disseminating information about education.

2 BACKGROUND TO THE EXPERIMENT

In April 1981, the library services of the five Education and Library Boards in Northern Ireland and the Department of Library and Information Studies at the Queen's University of Belfast (QUB) formed a small Prestel input co-operative on an experimental basis for a year. The new information provider (IP) known as 'Northern Ireland Public Libraries' used the facilities offered by the LASER information umbrella. Each member purchased an equal number of frames. As the size of the data-base was thirty-six frames it was agreed that it would be regarded as one entity rather than each member of the co-operative claiming ownership over six frames.

The aims of the experiment were as follows:-

a) To involve public libraries in Northern Ireland in Prestel generally

b) To enable QUB to carry out research

c) To enable librarians to gain experience in writing/designing information for the new medium

d) To enable librarians to gain experience with the new medium without making any long-term commitment

e) To foster co-operation between the public libraries and the university

3 ACCESS TO PRESTEL IN THE EXPERIMENT

During the experiment Prestel was accessed at the Education Department QUB. Input sheets were submitted by post to LASER in London. The final appearance of frames was left to LASER staff, although as the experiment progressed the co-operative made suggestions particularly on the use of colour. None of the libraries had installed Prestel receivers. Several reasons explain this state of affairs.

a) When Prestel was introduced to Northern Ireland in November 1980 it was only available at the local call rate in the greater Belfast area.

b) The absence of information relating to Northern Ireland meant that extensive use in libraries would be unlikely.

c) Librarians had many reservations about Prestel based on early evaluation in Britian and several Northern Ireland studies (Peoples 1981, Urquhart 1981).

Clearly the experiment was aimed to educate and train librarians to write and design Prestel input rather than provide the public with a new form of information service.

4 THE NATURE OF INPUT

After initial discussions the input team decided to experiment with two categories of information.

a) A monthly diary of events and update of services and facilities available in public libraries. This enabled the team to access the practical difficulties of gathering and inputting information which changed regularly.

b) A special feature dealing with a particular topic. This gave the team experience in writing more extensive information for Prestel and discovering the advantages and disadvantages of the medium.

As the experiment progressed information for the diary was presented in an number of ways - by library service, by date and by towns in alphabetical order. Apart from the inevitable information about displays, exhibitions, story-times and so forth, information was provided about newly published booklists, a new talking newspaper service and the wide range of events organised for Children's Book Week in October 1981 was publicised.

During the experiment three special features were produced - Local studies services (Fig. 1), Library services for adult learners (Fig. 2), and Careers information for the school leaver (Fig. 3). These enabled the team to organize information in the tree structure which is so central to Prestel. This raised many practical difficulties such as the style of writing, the layout of frames and the use of colour. These are very real problems which many librarians who criticise Prestel from the back-seat do not appreciate. To some extent the choice of topic was somewhat abritary and depended largely on the interests of the team member who was primarily responsible for designing each feature.

5 DECIDING AND DESIGNING THE INPUT

Input for the diary was organised in a simple way. Each library service submitted information by a specified cut-off date for information relating to the next month. The project co-ordinator at QUB designed the overall layout and sent input sheets to LASER. Input for the special feature required a more complicated organization. A number of stages were involved.

a) The team met as a group to decide a topic.

b) One member undertook to design a data-base for the topic and later sent a draft copy to each team member.

c) The team met to discuss the design, query the logic underlying its structure and make any necessary alterations.

d) The team approved the overall design and content.

e) The designer and the project co-ordinator met to re-write the information to make it suitable for Prestel.

f) The project co-ordinator completed input forms and submitted them to LASER.

6 FUTURE OF THE EXPERIMENT

So many issues were raised in the course of the experiment that it is to continue in 1982/83. Fewer special features were developed than initially intended. This was primarily because the input design process was time consuming and the team met only roughly once a month because of the distance involved in travelling to Belfast and other work commitments. The diary was the most unsatisfactory part of the experiment. This was a result of the difficulties of collecting information within each library service and the time lag between organizing it in Belfast and submitting it to LASER. If an editing terminal had been available then the efficiency of the experiment would have improved.

7 NEW DIRECTIONS

To date most of the information input by public libraries who are acting as information providers has largely been in the field of community information. There is a need for librarians to look in other directions and experiment with Prestel in different ways. By chance the Northern Ireland experiment focused on educational topics in the broadest sense. Although the experiment was not aimed at the information needs of students it is felt that the experience gained could prove beneficial to students generally and part-time students in particular. An attempt will be made to suggest ways in which Prestel could help the part-time student in his use of the library.

8 PART-TIME STUDENTS AND THEIR INFORMATION NEEDS

Although selective, Table 1 indicates that part-time students study a wide range of courses, in a variety of institutions, in different locations and learn by a variety of methods. In common with full-time students they require information about topics such as:-

a) The educational establishment offering the course

b) The range of courses available

c) The contents of each course

d) Career and job opportunities

e) Libraries and their use

f) Learning resources generally

g) Course assignments and assessment methods

Currently this information is available from a number of information sources such as prospectuses, course handbooks, reading lists, library guides and lecturers. An alternative source of information for some of this information is Prestel with experimental data-bases being made available by organizations such as CET, CNAA and UCCA. The Open University is developing its own view-data system Optel and according to Bacsich (1981) in future years this will be a major method by which the OU will communicate with its students throughout the United Kingdom. The area which currently appears to be neglected the most is information designed for students about libraries and their use. This gap is hardly surprising in view of the fact that the general perception of the student, even within the educational world, is someone who studies full-time at a particular institution. Table 1 highlights the great need for educationalists in general and librarians in particular to realise that the educational world is rapidly changing. Distance learning, for example, where the student is not associated with a particular library in the institution providing the course, is increasing in importance. Table 1 illustrates the great diversity amongst part-time students. Perhaps the only thing one can say with confidence about most part-time students is that their time is at a premium. Whereas the full-time student has more time in theory to come to grips with the complicated information environment outlined above the part-time student is often under pressure because of the demands of work, family and other interests. In view of the fact that part-time students are important but often neglected library users it would seem worthwhile to consider how Prestel could be used to assist students in their use of libraries.

9 WHY PRESTEL AND THE PART-TIME STUDENT?

Potentially Prestel is available anywhere and at any time. This means that the student who could be studying one day a week at an institution or receiving educational materials at a distance could use Prestel to save time if relevant library information was available. The Ulster Polytechnic study by Russell and Lyttle (1979) clearly indicates that physical distance is an important factor in the behaviour of part-time students. The use of Prestel could help to break-down this barrier. A simple example will illustrate the point. Currently many part-time students waste a lot of their limited time in college trying to find out if information relevant to their needs is available in the library. If information about the library resources was available on Prestel then the student could acquaint himself with the range of services available on his own home Prestel receiver or his nearest public library. At the very least the student would be better able to communicate with library staff if he knew for a fact that a certain service was at his disposal.

Within the United Kingdom there are great spatial variations in access to information. In a Northern Ireland context Belfast, for example, has been shown by Cochrane (1981) to be an information 'rich' area whereas with a few isolated exceptions such as Londonderry and Coleraine the rest of the Province can be regarded as information 'poor'. The Open University student living in Omagh is hardly going to make a journey to a special collection of material in Belfast on the off chance that he will find information relevant to an assignment. If some form of overview as available on Prestel then frustration could be diminished.

In order to highlight the range of possibilities available some suggestions to cater for the needs of part-time students using public and academic libraries follow. They are by no means comprehensive but show what could be done with a little imagination.

10 SOME POSSIBLE USES OF PRESTEL FOR PART-TIME STUDENTS USING PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Very often part-time students have little or no access to a library in the institution providing the course. Consequently public libraries find themselves attempting to serve a variety of needs. University extra-mural students, for example, are often not permitted to borrow books from the university library because of the number of students involved. Although limited book collections may be available for particular classes this hardly constitutes a library service. If a public library in co-operation with a university made available information about follow-up readings and resources on Prestel then extra-mural students would be able to access the information at any time. It would mean that students who are interested in a particular course but for some reason did not enrol would still be able to gain access to information about course resources.

The public library plays an important role in resource provision for the Open University student. Regional OU offices attempt to liaise with public libraries to improve the quality of service. Resource problems can be acute because of the multi-media nature of OU courses. Television broadcasts illustrate this point. Although the video recording of OU television programmes has overcome the problem of students viewing them at un-social hours, not all students have video-recorders. Public libraries could input information to Prestel listing the range of video recordings available in the library. This could be regularly updated as the range of recordings and the range of courses studied in a particular area changed.

A wide range of continuing education courses is now offered by both the BBC and the independent broadcasters. This trend is likely to increase with the imminent arrival of the fourth channel. Television programmes, for example, are often accompanied by specially prepared handbooks, information packages and telephone referral services. This started in a big way with the BBC Adult Literacy Campaign. Currently the BBC computer literacy campaign reflects a new relationship between broadcasters, educators and the general public. Public libraries in conjunction with broadcasters could provide information on Prestel related to such programmes and tailor-made to the resources avaiable to a particular community. To illustrate this point the Northern Ireland guide to local studies materials could have been tied directly to the television series 'History on your doorstep' (BBC 2). An informal approach was in fact made to the BBC in London to see if it would be possible to announce the existence of the data-base to viewers in Northern Ireland at the end of each programme. This met with a negative response. As 'opt-out' facilities are difficult on BBC 2 this idea would have posed problems for the broadcasters. Nevertheless the idea of public libraries providing follow-up information relating to television broadcasts via Prestel is feasible.

11 SOME POSSIBLE USES OF PRESTEL FOR PART-TIME STUDENTS USING ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Prestel could play an important role in a library's user education programme. An overview of the literature/resources on a specific course could be made available on Prestel in a similar way to the special features described earlier. Even with a limited number of Prestel frames at its disposal a library could build up a range of information guides on Prestel by storing them on audio-cassettes. Students could simply select a relevant cassette and view the information on the Prestel terminal in the library. A print-copying facility added to the terminal would mean that the student could copy sections relevant to his needs. Obviously all students could benefit from this service but it would be particularly useful for part-time students who often receive little or no user education due to pressures of time. One important finding of the Ulster Polytechnic study was that many part-time students tended to use other libraries. Clearly it would help students if they were aware of the range of facilities and resources available to them in other libraries in the area. There is no reason why academic libraries in an area could not co-operate in a similar way to the public libraries in Northern Ireland

12 REACTIONS OF PART-TIME STUDENTS

A limited number of part-time students were shown the Northern Ireland special features on Prestel to gauge their reactions and determine if they could suggest uses to improve their use of and access to libraries. In most cases they were viewing Prestel for the first time, so it was difficult to suggest specific uses. It emerged that several students telephoned libraries to seek information but as they had difficulty in clearly articulating their needs they often found this unsatisfactory. An overall guide to resources in a particular library on Prestel would have helped them to ask more definite questions.

13 REACTIONS OF EDUCATORS

A limited number of educators dealing with part-time students were shown the special features and were enthusiastic about the idea although they expressed the inevitable concern about cost and the current rarity of Prestel terminals. A representative of the Open University in Northern Ireland for example felt it could be very relevant to the needs of OU students in rural areas. Further investigations are currently taking place to assess the attitudes of the educators to the idea of using Prestel in a variety of ways.

14 FEASIBILITY

The suggestions made have been based on the assumption that basic Prestel facilities are available to a library i.e. a Prestel receiver and the availability of frames through an umbrella information provider such as LASER. The range of possibilities open to libraries catering for the needs of part-time students could be extended if more sophisticated equipment was available. If a library or a group of libraries working in co-operation had an editing terminal information could be quickly updated. In the not too distant future the student could interact via Prestel at a distance to reserve specific books on a reading list or ask for articles on the list to be photocopied and posted. In view of the fact that most libraries currently do not have Prestel and very few households possess a Prestel terminal such ideas often seem to be merely fantasy.

Although the suggestions made are relatively simple it is obvious that the cost of renting frames and the time involved would deter many librarians from adopting them. Unfortunately because of the current scepticism surrounding Prestel librarians seem to avoid investigating new possibilities. Librarians should note that whereas only a relatively small percentage of the population is made up of full-time students, the population as a whole can be regarded as an enormous group of part-time students learning about an immense variety of subjects. In the future many more people may be learning at a distance through a variety of information sources. Already the functions of the domestic television receiver are changing rapidly. Video cassettes, video discs, videotex systems, telesoftware and microcomputers can all use the same television receiver as a display terminal. Rediffusion have recently launched their Teleputer system, a multi-purpose workstation combining all the above facilities designed for home and office use. Librarians should start to pave the way for the challenges that lie ahead by experimenting with Prestel with the part-time student in mind.

15 CONCLUSIONS

The Northern Ireland experiment has shown that:-

15.1 Public libraries can provide information on Prestel about library services and library resources aimed at specific user groups.

15.2 Public libraries can co-operate to input information to Prestel.

15.3 Practical difficulties associated with writing and designing the information can be minimized with experience.

15.4 Academic and public libraries could present information on Prestel to cope with the needs of different kinds of part-time students in relation to their use of libraries.

15.5 Part-time students and educators dealing with their needs seem favourably disposed to the idea of using Prestel but more research needs to be done in this area.

15.6 Libraries in general should widen the scope of information they provide on Prestel.

15.7 More libraries should be actively involved in the provision of Prestel services rather than merely criticise the existing input.

15.8 As society becomes more aware of the changing functions of the domestic television receiver Prestel may gain greater acceptance to enable the ideas suggested to be implemented.

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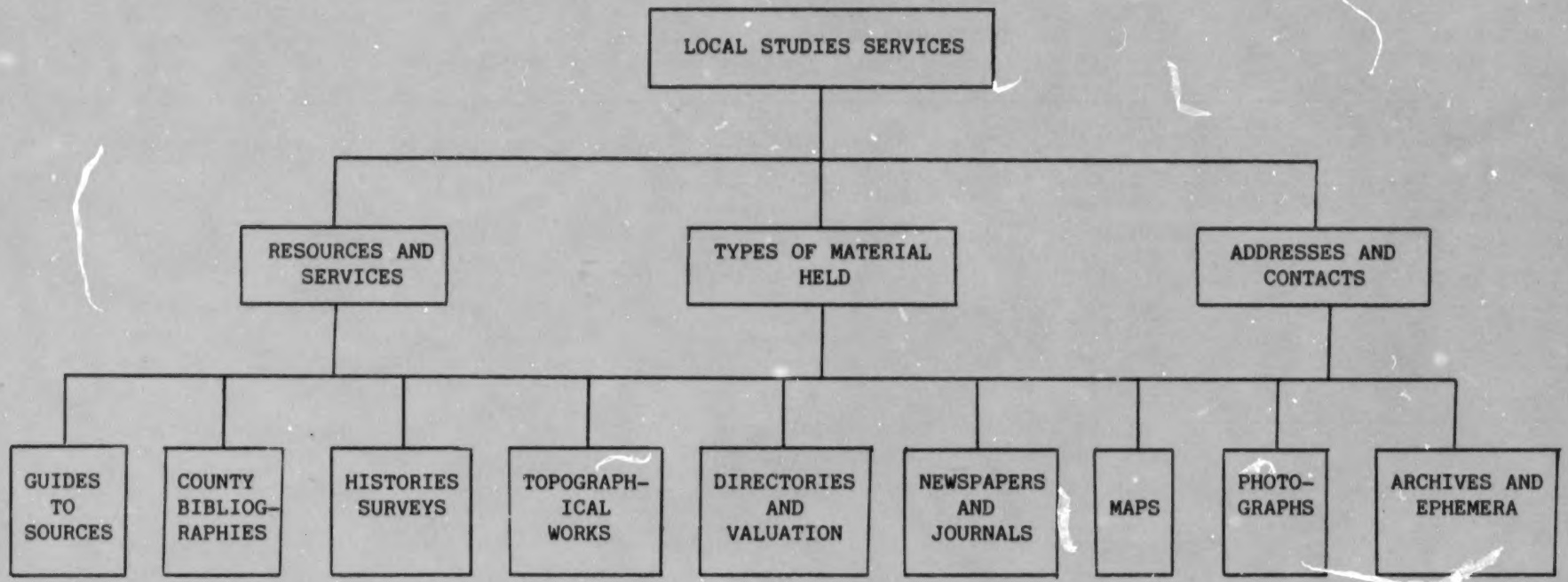
TABLE 1 - PART-TIME STUDENTS - A SELECT OVERVIEW[1]

TYPE OF COURSE	MAIN LEARNING METHODS	INSTITUTION OFFERING COURSE	LIBRARY ACCESS
Degree/Diploma	lectures/seminars etc.	universities, polytechnics	limited access in institution
" "	distance learning	some universities, polytechnics and colleges	access to libraries in other institutions
Professional/ vocational	lectures/seminars etc.	polytechnics, further education colleges	limited access in institutions
"	distance learning	correspondence colleges	access to libraries in other institutions
Continuing education			
a) extra-mural	lectures/seminars etc.	universities/polytechnics	access to libraries in other institutions
b) adult education/ further education classes	lectures/seminars etc.	further education colleges, community colleges, open colleges	access to libraries mostly in other institutions
c) adult education/ post experience	distance learning	some universities, some polytechnics, the broadcasting organizations	access to libraries in other institutions

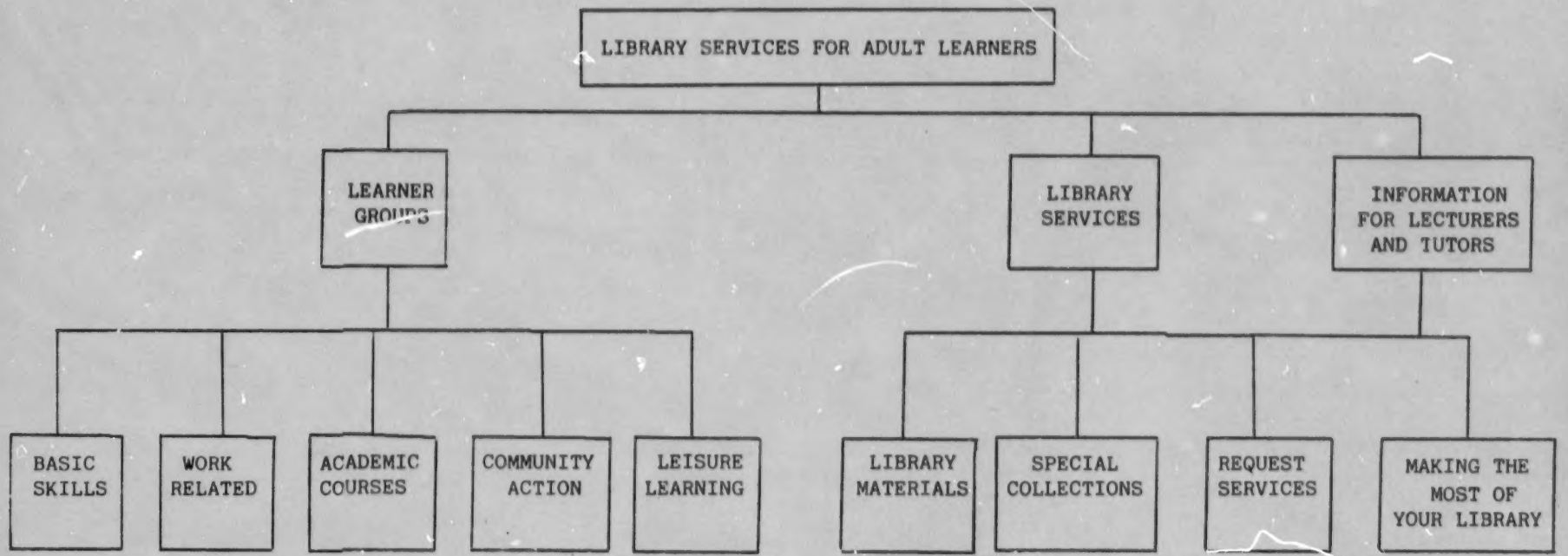
1 These categories are not mutually exclusive

FIGURE 1 - NORTHERN IRELAND PUBLIC LIBRARIES - PRESTEL SPECIAL FEATURE 1



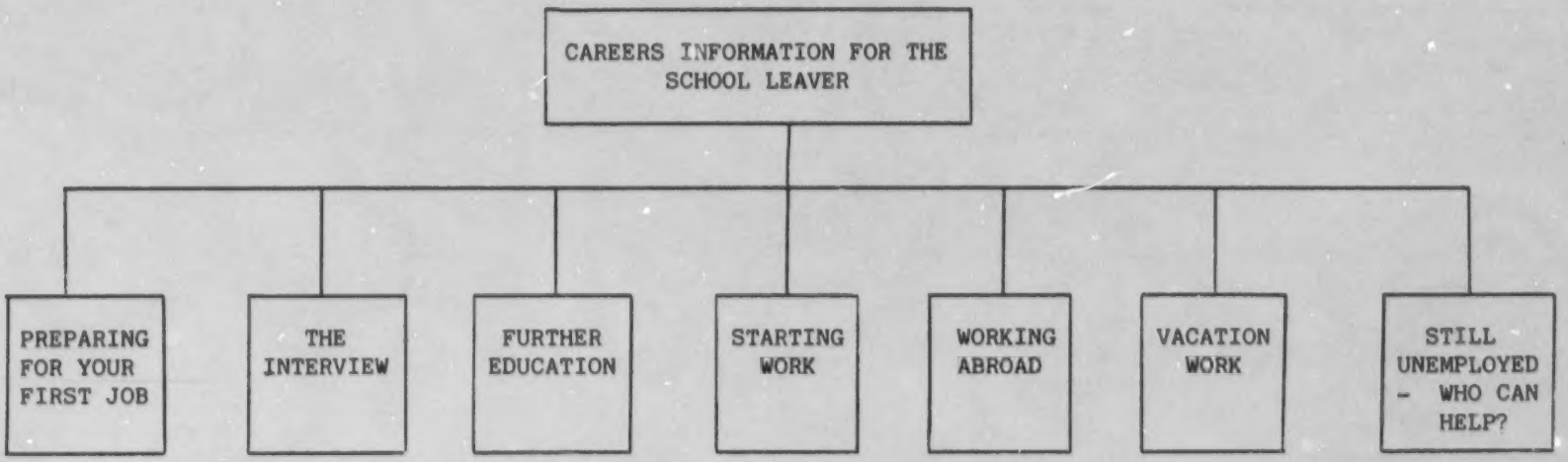
Based on an idea by Malcolm Buchanan, South Eastern Education and Library Board

FIGURE 2 - NORTHERN IRELAND PUBLIC LIBRARIES - PRESTEL SPECIAL FEATURE 2



Based on an idea Anne Peoples, Western Education and Library Board

FIGURE 3 - NORTHERN IRELAND PUBLIC LIBRARIES - PRESTEL SPECIAL FEATURE 3



Based on an idea by Dierdre Armstrong and Linda Greenwood, Belfast Education and Library Board

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PROVIDING INFORMATION AND ADVICE ON EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES: A NEW ROLE FOR LIBRARIANS

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This paper first defines what is meant by educational information and advice, and deals with some of the problems, inherent, organisational, ethical and political, which surround their adequate provision to the adult enquirer. In some senses, it is seen that a coherently developed strategy of provision of information and advice on adult education is indeed a new role for libraries. A model is proposed, the dangers of complacency or delay are indicated.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the role, actual and potential, of public libraries in the provision of educational guidance for adults. It draws on material collected as part of the conduct of the Educational Advisory Services Project, which is funded by the British Library and located at the Open University, Yorkshire Region. A fuller report of the Project's (EASP's) work to date is available (Butler 1982) and a final report, which will include findings from the only independently conducted research into the consumer's viewpoint in this field, will be presented to the British Library in September 1982.

In ascertaining the extent to which public libraries can act in educational guidance for adults, the scope of that term needs clear delineation. In line with 'Links to Learning' (Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education 1979), EASP views guidance as a generic term, encompassing four main kinds of provision. These are:

a) adequate information and help in interpreting that information.

b) a full array of appropriate options and assistance where necessary in making a choice (advice).

c) help in elucidating needs, capabilities, aspirations and potentialities (assessment and counselling).

d) assistance in implementing the chosen goal.

It is already apparent that in certain respects educational guidance does not represent 'a new role' for public libraries. The provision of educational information and its interpretation is commonplace; EASP's own researches indicate that advice and assessment are also present and, although only very occasionally, implementation. By far the greater emphasis is given to information and, less overtly, to advice, so it is to these two areas that particular attention will be paid. In order to do that, it is important again to define terms and also to consider what are understood to be adults' needs in these areas.

Information is here defined as input material about educational provision and availability, which may comprise 'hard' data (the time and venue of a particular class is an example) and/or 'soft' data (for instance, the degree of formality or informality characteristic of an institution's approach to the adult learner). In the view of many of the public librarians taking part in the EASP survey, most adults are unfamiliar with the full range of continuing education provision and are inexpert at information retrieval. They may have little idea of what information to collect: some information, anyway, will be inaccessible to them as members of the public. They may have neither the means nor the confidence to collect it. They may have little idea how to classify educational information and to identify what is relevant to them. The adult learner is now, therefore, in most cases dependent on an intermediary to perform these tasks in order to make a full-informed choice.

Broadly, adult learners need information on education opportunities that is comprehensive, accurate, objective and readily accessible. These characteristics are, of course, inter-related.

- to find the mode of teaching and learning most suited to his/her personality and circumstances. This will include, for example, lectures/group work; formal/informal; examined/continuously assessed; face-to-face/distance teaching; recruitment profile, e.g. adult/adolescent.

f) that coverage of educational opportunities inevitably overlaps with information on training opportunities. The distinction is not easily made by enquirers and it appears that there is increasing demand from individuals recently made redundant and seeking advice on vocational training opportunities (particularly secretarial/new technologies/TOP/local employment with day-release or in-house training opportunities). In addition, training opportunities do not necessarily relate to employment but to an individual's desire to enhance his/her personal skills domain. Outwith the statutory continuing education providers, non-vocational training opportunities are offered by private institutions (e.g. driving instructors); voluntary organisations with a training element (e.g. C.A.B.); clubs and societies (e.g. sports clubs); statutory organisations with a training element (e.g. Territorial Army).

g) that similar considerations apply to information on careers opportunities, whether entry, process or subsequent employment.

2. Accurate educational information

"We may well be forgiven for not spotting that someone's marriage is breaking down: we certainly won't be forgiven for giving them the wrong information." (An educational counsellor).

It is at the very least discouraging and irritating to be given information which is inaccurate or misleading in part or in whole, especially when adults have so many other calls on their time and where the consequences of misinformation may be irretrievably bad.

3. Objective educational information

It has been said, in an address given at Hull University by Dr. Richard Hoggart, that Universities' current recruitment policies with regard to mature students were characterised by a mixture of hauteur and expediency. Many libraries report a similar attitude is shown by a variety of educational providers. Actions such as one institution flooding a collaborative open day held in a library with its representatives and publicity material are not uncommon. Libraries typically have little control over the quality of information offered by individual institutions to whom enquirers are referred. Brochures and prospectuses are primarily marketing tools.

Adults, therefore, need objective information in particular about:

- the quality of the course under consideration in terms of content, teaching and student support, and reputation.
- its suitability for their purposes and their level of ability.
- the recruitment needs and policies of the providing institution.

4. Readily accessible educational information

Continuing education providers of all kinds have long recognised the importance, for the purposes of their own recruitment, of making information about their courses physically accessible. The means adopted appears to depend in part at least on whether they operate open or restrictive access policies. Open access providers are likely to broadcast their information: door-to-door leafleting is an example. Restrictive access providers are likely to narrow-cast their information, by distributing their brochures only in response to individual enquiries, for example.

If it is intended to widen access to continuing education opportunities, it follows that comprehensive, accurate and objective educational information needs to be broadcast. This necessitates either:

a) a format which lends itself to any location where adults go in pursuit of their role as learner, for example, educational establishments, libraries, careers services; which is cheap to reproduce; easy to correct and update; and portable.

and/or

b) a broadcast network of individuals, in accessible locations, able to offer such information themselves.

Accessibility of information also implies information which is comprehensible and inviting to read. Complaints commonly offered by public librarians about brochures and prospectuses are:

- language which is difficult to understand or even incomprehensible.
- language which is prohibitive in tone
- unwieldy format
- lack of internal logic
- lack of indexes.

Given that:

a) educational information is only accessible where the individual is at the point of being able to realise that information in relation to his or her needs and capacities.

b) any format which moves away from the single-institution, marketing-oriented brochure or prospectus produces its own paradox:

- comprehensiveness may also mean complexity.

- comprehensiveness may necessitate the sacrifice of detail.

then it is apparent that some adult learners may still require help in interpreting information even when it is presented in a comprehensive, accurate, objective and accessible way. It is also clear that information interpretation may be interdependent with assessment, advice and counselling. With this definition of educational information and outline of need in mind, it is appropriate now to turn to an examination of potential.

It has already been observed that educational information-provision is a common-place in public libraries; however, the breadth and depth of the need that is outlined here is outside the practice of any public library currently. Hesitancy appears to have a number of causes:

- a conviction that the library already provides adequate access to educational information (fears of encroachment on their professional domain sometimes inform this view).

- a belief that other sources of help are readily available and more appropriate.

- a lack of awareness of the inadequacy and partiality of information that may be available from those sources.

- a limited sensitivity to the difference between the presenting enquiry and the root enquiry, which itself may be dependent on.

- a limited grasp of the complexity and nature of continuing education opportunities open to adults.

- anxiety about the complexity of the task and the consequent drain on scarce resources.

- a view that educational guidance as practised has to do primarily with client assessment, counselling and evaluative advice on appropriate options, this last based on in-depth knowledge of individual courses.

- a view that educational information-giving may lead to advice-giving and that this is dangerous, outside the competence of librarians and inimical to the ethic of neutrality.

- the necessity of collaboration with providing institutions and the inherent organisational problems.

- uncertainty about the level of demand for such facilities.

However, EASP's survey of consumers' use of and response to help available from public libraries indicates that libraries do need to look more carefully at their provision in their field. Their information is not always adequate or appropriately offered to the enquirer for a variety of reasons, yet the reputation of the public library rests on providing information in this context in a better and more accessible form than a member of the public could easily provide for her/himself.

Moreover, while public librarians cannot be expected to be arbiters of authenticity of educational information, they have a professional responsibility, if not a moral obligation, to facilitate access to information in such a way that the enquirer may draw her/his own conclusions about its partiality or bias. In many regions of the country, where no independent educational guidance service exists, the public library is the only agency where a potential adult learner might hope to find such a facility.

It must be said, however, that in EASP's view, libraries alone could not reasonably or realistically be expected to offer the fullest educational information in the form earlier detailed. There are some wider issues affecting its provision.

a) EASP has identified three levels of educational information. The first is public information, material which is made available specifically for public consumption by providing institutions, organisations and agencies. Obvious examples are brochures and prospectuses. The second is semi-public information, material which providers will normally offer if asked, most readily (although not exclusively) to co-professionals. A college's decision on the future provision of a particular course is an example here. The third level is private information, material which is not formally offered either to co-professionals or to members of the public, for example, views on the quality of a particular course or the competence of an individual teacher.

   It is perhaps a characteristic peculiar to educational information that so much of what may be relevant to fully informing an enquirer is held to be outwith the public domain. It is, of course, an obvious point that no public library service operates without at least basic public information; some have developed a very comprehensive range of source material and great competence in obtaining, storing, retrieving and interpreting such information. Many services do feel, however, that the pursuit of semi-public and private information is rarely feasible (it can be very time-consuming indeed) and possibly unwise. Private information in particular is seen as problematic. It is often dependent on subjective judgements and potentially highly disruptive of carefully nurtured personal contacts.

b) There is dispute, in a few services, over the range of information which should be carried. This point is illustrated by some services' decision to exclude from their information banks any educational provision made by non-statutory organisations (private tutors is an example) and it also carries implications about the provision of information on alternative modes of study, since these often come within the private sector. It can be argued that the provision of a full range of information, regardless of originating provider, is one of the identifying features of the enquirer-centred, as opposed to the institution-centred service. In some cases this is so, but often it appears essentially to be a practical problem of limited resources. On the other hand, this stance can also simply be a point of principle, to support the public sector wherever possible.

c) The question of who should be responsible for the provision of full adequate educational information is another problematic area. Librarians see themselves predominantly as a resource for very basic public-level information and as a referral point, holding that only those in charge of a course are able to provide really full and accurate information.

It seems to EASP that while this may be a justifiable attitude where semi-public and private information is concerned, it is much less so at the public level, and is intermixed with problems of resources, expertise and difficulties with the basic material of public level educational information, brochures and prospectuses. Resources, particularly staff time, to collate, verify and array such information is dauntingly limited. Public librarians often expressed doubts about the adequacy of their knowledge base in continuing education and in any case, saw this as an area where the providers ought to take more trouble. The heavy reliance on brochures and prospectuses as basic source material which arises from this mix of attitudes and practical difficulties creates its own problems. Some have been outlined earlier. There are many others. They are sometimes hard to obtain; they often arrive to late for peak demand; some of the information they contain will already be out-of-date on publication, and increasingly so as the academic year progresses; and in particular, they frequently lack the kind of information that those familiar with educational enquiries from adults know their public demands.

In summary, it is argued that libraries need to look more closely at their provision of educational information, in order to make it as comprehensive, accurate, objective and accessible as is compatible with their professional role. This argues for libraries taking a lead in the development of educational information, but they cannot be expected to pursue such development unilaterally. A great deal depends on the re-education of the providing institutions themselves. Public libraries would do well to develop a dialogue here.

Our second area of consideration is advice. Advice-giving appears to be a troublesome area of activity for public librarians, a service which apparently is more often requested of them then provided. The arguments against advice-giving are, of course, well-rehearsed. Advice appears to connote evaluation and directiveness. Librarians may reasonably argue that evaluation of the quality of courses is outside their sphere of competence; directiveness appears to run counter to the concept of neutrality in librarianship, smacking as it does of imposition and partiality. Again, EASP feels that confusion over definitions plays a part here and has identified a cluster of activities which might be grouped under the broad heading of advice-giving and which an aduit learner may wish access to:

a) the arraying of the fullest range of educational options and an analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of each one. This may be termed complete and non-directive advice.

b) recommendations on the most appropriate option to choose from that full range. This may be termed complete and directive advice.

c) the arraying of a narrow band from the full array of options and an analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of each one. This may be termed incomplete and non-directive advice.

d) recommending as most appropriate an option from that narrow band. This may be termed incomplete and directive advice.

Implicit in these definitions, clearly, is advice which is neither directive, partial nor imposed, i.e. complete and non-directive advice. Given an adequate information bank, this is an acceptable activity for public librarians. In addition, the process itself, essentially an exercise in comparison, may facilitate the evaluation of quality. Moreover, both directiveness and imposition may be perfectly appropriate in advice practice. Recommending a particular option, i.e. directive advice-giving, may be a perfectly reasonable response to directive advice-seeking and it is itself an imposition to refuse to give advice in many circumstances. Public libraries do offer directive advice, for example, to the enquirer seeking a typing class and unsure as which of those on offer will most suit her/his personal circumstancs. Nor is it difficult to envisage situations where the giving of unsolicited directive advice, or even its imposition, is absolutely proper. An example might be telling someone making enquiries about studying 'O' Levels by correspondence to check whether s/he will be able to sit the examination locally.

Nor is complete advice (the arraying of the fullest range of possible educational options) necessarily superior practice to incomplete advice (the arraying of a narrow band of options from the full range). The enquirer may specifically ask for or prefer only to deal with a narrow range of options.

We argue, then, that advice is an integral part of educational guidance as practised by public librarians and that no one form of advice, directive or non-directive, complete or incomplete, is intrinsically superior to another. Certain conditions must apply here, however:

a) An adequate and easily accessed information bank from which to draw out relevant options. Incomplete advice should be seen as an informed and positive judgement. The danger is that it may be passed off as a complete array or assumed to be so by an enquirer who is not informed otherwise. In other words, incomplete advice which arises from inadequacies in the information bank and/or the librarian's own lack of knowledge, should be declared to be so.

b) Staff who are competent to recognise the difference between information, advice and counselling need, as far as this is possible.

c) Staff who are competent to recognise the processes of enquirer assessment in which they may be engaged, consciously or unconsciously.

d) Directive advice should be seen as an informed and positive judgement and not be used as a vehicle for institution partiality or personal biases. Directive advice which is coloured to any extent by partiality or biases should be declared to be so to the enquirer.

Is it possible to propose a model for development based upon this analysis, a model which moves beyond the currently typical public library role in this area, that of repository of and distribution point for other institutions' and agencies' information/marketing materials? There is no doubt that librarians are correct in their view that educational information may be interdependent with other guidance functions. It is also true that some of these functions are outside their professional competence and ethos. However, the provision, interpretation and broadcasting of public and semi-public information lies squarely within the librarian's role, as does referral; and librarians rightly engage in advice-giving in several of the senses in which it is defined in this paper.

Taken as a whole, these comments point to a model of educational guidance activity which is particularly relevant to the public library service. This is that of the centre-network, comprising a broad-based central information point, offering comprehensive, accurate and accessible information at the public and semi-public levels together with advice and referral outwards, where necessary, to a full range of providers and agencies. Some implementation activity is relevant too. Certain coping skills training is very much within the public library sphere and is understood to be offered, or under consideration, by some services. The aspect of feedback concerned with the discernment of patterns of need and demand is also highly adaptable to a public library setting.

The value of the contribution which libraries can make in the development of educational information in particular is implicit throughout this paper. The quality of the information base determines the quality of all the other guidance functions; many other agencies would welcome public library expertise here. Moreover, information permanently and publicly available has a preventative role. Nor need such provision by labour-intensive. There is some evidence to suggest that many enquiriers may prefer a non-personal (as opposed to impersonal) information format, at least in the initial stages of their decision-making.

It is an interesting point that, in those few cases where library services have taken the initiative themselves to provide comprehensive and accurate educational information, it has been particularly well done, in terms of the quality, quantity, clarity and accessibility of the information. Whether such a facility leads to greater take-up of courses has not been a central consideration, but rather that those people who do so should have been well-directed.

The model proposed capitalises on existing expertise and information collections, as well as the institution-bias-free nature of the public library service. It provides immediately available and central located drop-in premises and a network of outreach points with educational institutions, i.e. branch libraries. It also provides full-time, non-office hours access. It capitalises on the libraries' tradition of co-operation with a wide variety of organisations and side-steps the inter-institution wrangling of apparent in educational management.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

A model for library development in the field of educational information and advice has been presented. However, growth in provision is being accomplished, now, independently of library involvement, or with only minimal involvement. Independent services and collaborative ventures are increasingly turning to the employment of CEP workers, or finding independent funding, to cope with their information needs. When such enterprises eventually attract permanent funding and appoint their own information officers, public library involvement could well be very notional indeed.

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THE PUBLIC LIBRARY AND EDUCATIONAL ADVICE: SOME PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

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This paper describes adult education advisory services operated during the last two years by Kent County Library on an experimental basis. Conclusions are drawn on the effectiveness of each experiment and current developments are briefly explained.

The County Library Service in Kent has always maintained a close connection with both formal and informal education. This is partly because of its management structure, which is responsible to the Libraries Sub-Committee of the Education Committee, and partly due to a positive commitment to this end on the part of the objectives of the Service. Furthermore, as part of the Service's information provision function it was seen as being important to offer practical advice to the community in an area where there was some confusion because of a plethora of choice of courses. Previous to the decision to handle an education advice service in a formal way, the County Library had offered only the normal services expected in the way of adult education, i.e. loans of books to adult classes, rooms for adult literacy tutoring and ad hoc information services.

The Broadstairs Experiment

Because of the commitment described above and following the observations of such services in other Authorities it was decided to experiment with an adult educational advice service. It was decided to do this initially at Broadstairs since the necessary accommodation was available at that library, since there was a wide range of adult education providers in the area and since its geogrpahical remoteness ensured, so far as possible, an experiment entity. The staff were enthusiastic about undertaking such an exercise and several planning meetings were held between them and representatives from the local Adult Education Centre, the local Technical College, the Open University, the Adult Literacy Scheme, the Manpower Services Commission and other interested bodies.

It was agreed to make the operation a low budget affair, which in effect meant not exceeding £100, although some organisations were able to contribute in kind, e.g. printing, posters for overprinting, etc. This cost, of course, did not include staffing input which was considerable, both on the part of the library staff and the organisations otherwise involved.

Publicity was seen to be particularly important and, although it was not possible to get the co-operation of the local paper or radio station, posters, leaflets and letters to local employers made sure that the publicity was as wide as possible within the area.

Since one of the objectives of the exercise was to demonstrate the way in which the library could help adult students to make their courses more effective, the library display was the focal point in the hall used. Passer-by were encouraged to visit by a sandwich board on the pavement outside the library, by an eye-catching display in the entrance foyer and by a continual video film extolling the virtues of the Open University courses at the entrance to the hall. Once inside the visitor could clearly see the stands publicising the various providers of education. Some of these stands were manned, others, due to staffing difficulties, were not. The library stand was manned at all times by professional staff who were particularly careful to assist visitors who showed an interest in one of the unmanned stands.

Approximately 500 visitors came to the exhibition, which was kept open for three days; Thursday, Friday and Saturday. It was not possible to match any increased number of enrolments with attendance at the exhibition since obviously many factors could account for this. At a retrospective meeting to evaluate the success of the exhibition some exhibitors were less than enthusiastic about its success and it was agreed not to repeat the effort on an annual basis. However, the library staff felt that some positive benefit had accrued in publicising essential services to library users and non-users.

Sittingbourne and Faversham

During the same year as the Broadstairs experiment but for different reasons it was decided that libraries in the Swale Division should assist the local Adult Education Centres in publicising their courses. At Sittingbourne the centre had moved to a site some distance from the town centre and felt that a town centre site for publicity and enrolment was essential. It was decided to combine this with advisory sessions held by Adult Education Centre staff for a week preceding the personal enrolment period. Again, considerable thought was given to publicity and, in addition to the normal prospectuses, posters and handbills were widely circulated. Press releases sent to local newspapers were not used, however.

Both organisations felt that the experiment of holding advisory sessions for the public at Sittingbourne and Faversham was worthwhile and worthy of repeating. The Adult Education Centre found the town centre site of the public library invaluable, with its opportunity to advertise and promote courses and to make contact with potential students. The library was able to carry out functions which were seen as being part of its objectives as well as at the same time publicising a wide range of its services to the community at large, and adult students in particular.

Current Developments

The experiment described above based at Sittingbourne has subsequently been repeated at other towns in the County for example at Sevenoaks and Canterbury, but the adult education advisory service presented at Broadstairs has not been repeated.

Current activities in this field are mainly linked with the Open University. In January and February 1982 a series of library induction evenings were held throughout the County. These sought to explain the services offered at each local library to both new and continuing O.U. students. Held in the evenings, and with publicity arranged by the Open University on a direct mailing list basis, there was a varied response. This was felt to be mainly due to exceptionally bad weather conditions which prevailed at the time, but, even so, up to 20 students attended at each of the 26 libraries taking part.

Following this we are involved in circulating an Open University publicity display to all professionally manned service points in the County to attract new students to the O.U. and in June and July library staff will participate in "Face to Face" open meetings designed to explain the Open University courses to potential students.

In the more distance future it is anticipated that computer equipment currently being installed in the County's larger libraries will be used to access data held on file giving details of adult education courses throughout the County. The advantage of this would be to save considerable staff time, not only in libraries, spent on maintaining manual records held to provide such information.

LIBRARIES, INDEPENDENT LEARNING AND THE PART-TIME STUDENT

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This paper looks at some definitions of independent learning, part-time study and continuing education as it has evolved in the last decade. The needs of self-directed learners are given particular consideration within the context of educational change, and a proposal for the development of a Learners' Advisory Service, based on the American experience, is put forward.

Sections 4.1 and 4.2 of this paper were first published in Education (17th August 1979, p. 162) as a piece by Sheila Dale entitled Independence in USA. Permission to reproduce it here has been granted by Tudor David, Managing Editor of Education.

1. DEFINITIONS

1.1 Independent learning

'The goal of adult learning, as in all learning, must be independence through the achievement of competence and this can only occur, ultimately, when the student assumes responsibility for his or her own learning.'

(Wilson 1980)

This statement of the goals of learning, by a contemporary critic of the adult education scene, makes a good starting point for consideration of the nature of independent learning, and the definition of terminology.

Charles Wedemeyer (Wedemeyer 1981, pp 52-53) briefly reviews the literature on the conceptual bases of independent learning, drawing on authorities in such varied fields as philosophy, learning theory, psychology and cultural anthropology among others. Much emphasis is placed on the autonomy of the learner as regards the pace of learning, the place of learning, the mode of learning and the choice of goals and activities. Wedemeyer then goes on to refer to the confused nature of independent learning, where the terms may be applied to the medium, the distance or the act of learning. Michael Moore (1980) also attempts a definition of independent learning. According to Moore, such learning broadly falls into three categories:

a) The scholarly tradition, based on the Oxford and Cambridge tutorial system.

b) Teaching at a distance - correspondence study and mixed media schemes. (The Open University would feature here).

c) Autonomous learning

'While some adult learners need help in formulating their learning objectives, in identifying sources of information, and in measuring achievement, many other learners do not need such guidance. These are the autonomous learners. A fully autonomous learner is a person who can identify his learning need when he finds a problem to be solved, a skill to be acquired, or information to be obtained. He is able to articulate his need in the form of a general goal, differentiate that goal into several specific objectives, and define fairly explicitly his criteria for successful achievement. In implementing his need, he gathers the information he desires, collects ideas, practices skills, works to resolve his problems and achieves his goals. In evaluating, the learner judges the appropriateness of newly acquired skills, the adequacy of his solutions, and the quality of his new ideas and knowledge. He reaches conclusions, accepting or rejecting the material, and eventually decides his goals have been achieved or can be abandoned ... The autonomous learner is thus independent.'

Moore goes on to discuss the importance of autonomy in adult learning, concluding:

'Since autonomy is presumed to be descriptive of adult beahvior, the critical task for adult educators is to restore and support learner autonomy.'

(page 25)

However, throughout the discussion, such learning is seen as taking place within the institutional context, although the ties may be loose.

'An adult pursuing independent study is not a kind of Robinson Crusoe. He has a teacher, or many teachers, and there is a transaction between them ...'

(Page 17)

1.2 Part-time students

It is difficult to define the part-time student or to assess accurately the number of students in some form of adult education or training. An Education digest, in a broad sweep of all types of adult education, set the figure at five to six million, or approximately 15% of the adult population in any one year ("Adult and continuing: an Education Digest" 1981). DES statistical bulletin 15/81 gives figures for part-time enrolments at all further education establishments, including polytechnics, institutes of higher education and colleges of further education, totalling roughly three million (Department of Education and Science 1981). The range of part-time students, then, extends from the Womens' Institute class, through the LEA or WEA adult education class and university extra-mural departments to the part-time vocational and advanced courses in polytechnics. To these can be added approximately a quarter of a million students in part-time higher education in universities and some ninety-thousand Open University students. Thus the spread is considerable and the type of study varied. A fuller investigation into numbers is undertaken in the paper by John Simpson (1983). The question will be raised later in this paper as to whether the estimates given here are inclusive of all part-time students.

1.3 Continuing education

It may be helpful at this point to look quickly at the educational context in which the thinking on independent learning, outlined above, has been taking place, and in which the part-time students operate. Peculiar to the last decade has been the growing attention devoted to the concept of 'continuing' or 'life-long' education.

This has arisen in part from rapid technological changes and their implications for people's working lives, and may have gained emphasis recently because of the economic climate which in turn is forcing people to change occupations in mid-career. The concept of life-long education carries with it the idea of equality of opportunity regardless of race, class, sex, age or economic circumstances. Samuel Gould (1976), a leading American educationalist, identifies other concepts inextricably linked with this: individual opportunity, flexibility of structure, and break from tradition. He further identifies four major themes deriving from the concept of non-traditional study:

'Encouragement of equality of opportunity; focus on the individual learner; ease of access to a learning experience through many means including the technological; and appropriate use of all the learning resources of a community.'

(page 41)

In Great Britain the 1970s saw the publication of the Russell report (Department of Education and Science 1973), the Venables report (Open University, Committee on Continuing Education 1976) and the establishment of the Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education - all concerned with the provision of educational opportunities for adults, and increasingly taking account of the need to make that provision accessible. None the less, it could be argued that these reports, and our thinking in Britain to date, have failed to push the frontiers forward to the extent envisaged by Samuel Gould or by the Commission on Non-traditional Study set up in the United States in 1971, whose findings were published under the title of Diversity by design (Commission on Non-traditional Study 1973), points which will be returned to later.

Perhaps the most interesting development in Great Britain, in relation to independent learning, has been the interest shown in the establishment of educational advisory and information services, of which there are now over forty in the country, as shown in the Educational Advisory Services Project 1982 directory (Educational Advisory Services Project 1982). The need for such development was pointed to in the Venables report (Open University, Committee on Continuing Education 1976) and by the Advisory Council (Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education 1979).

Few people, it can be presumed, would disagree that if educational opportunities are available those seeking them should be apprised of their availability. However, where the development appears to fall short is in the failure to realise that not all people wishing to learn can join groups or classes. There may be barriers of distance or cost; there may be family complications (one-parent families or people caring for invalids); there may be personal incapacity or simply personality factors which work against group learning within the normal educational framework, even including the less formal adult education contexts. While these problems remain uncatered for, it cannot be said that we have in Great Britain adequate provision for continuing education, or that we can meet the needs of truly independent learners, who, it can be premised, are ipso facto part-time learners in the main.

2 PROVING INDEPENDENCE

A major problem to establishing provision for such people can be claimed to be lack of proof of their existence. Most research into numbers in adult or part-time education has concentrated on the institutional context. In recent years, however, some pertinent and useful studies have been undertaken in other contexts.

A good indication of the learning needs and patterns of adults has been provided by Allan Tough (1971). Taking as his definition of a learning project a highly deliberate effort to gain and retain certain knowledge and skill over a series of sessions primarily devoted to learning totalling not less than seven hours in six months, he made the following discoveries concerning Canadian adults. The typical person undertakes about eight projects a year, and spends an average of about ninety hours on each project. Approximately two thirds (68%) of the projects were planned by the learner himself. In a further analysis of professional versus amateur planning it was shown that 81% of projects were planned by 'amateurs' (i.e. the learner, a friend or a peer group), and 19% by 'professionals' (i.e. people paid or designated for the job). Less than 1% of the learning efforts were directed towards educational credit. These figures are based on a sample of 66 people interviewed in 1970.

Other surveys have produced similar findings. In the United States, Patrick Penland (1979) discovered that about 80% of the American population aged 18 years and above saw themselves as continuing learners, and that 76% were involved in self-initiated projects. New findings for planning one's own learning emerged and were ranked very high.

'These findings indicate that a great many people are concerned about setting their own learning pace and exploring their own learning style rather than submitting to formal course-oriented experiences ... The following comments indicate an increasing maturity along adult learners:

> I wanted to keep the learning strategy flexible and easy to change.
>
> I wanted to put my own structure on the learning project rather than wait for a course.

Reasons like these for undertaking self-initiated learning have implications for adult educators.'

(page 174)

In Britain replications of the Tough work have been undertaken by Marie Strong (1977) and Stephen Brookfield (1981). These studies confirm the existence of adult independent learners. That such people have existed for a long time was referred to by Rogers and Groombridge (Rogers and Groombridge 1976, p. 58):

'In fact, most adult learning goes on outside the classroom and always will. It is such a mundane and familiar activity that it is easy to overlook how deliberately and constantly many millions of adults are seeking to learn something new.'

Since the founding of the Open University in 1969, applications for enrolment have regularly greatly exceeded provisional registrations, indicating that there may be a sizeable number of people who might wish to study independently. To these could be added some of those who have dropped out of adult education following the rises in fees in recent times, as reported in the journal, Education ("Adult fees rise and rolls drop", 1981) and in the DES statistical bulletin 15/81 (Department of Education and Science 1981). Also to be considered are the increasing number of young people who, because of cuts, will be unable to secure places in higher education, and those aged both under and over eighteen who are unemployed.

3 EXTENDING THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Dissatisfaction with the present education system at the post-school level has been expressed in various quarters. Sir Frederick Dainton (1972) calls for a re-examination of higher education:

'It is therefore essential to have great variety of educational opportunity and flexible arrangements which facilitate the transfer of students between institutions and courses.'

Norman Evans (1981) points to the necessity to take account of student needs, experience and individual learning, and argues for increased flexibility (particularly in part-time higher education) in Great Britain, along the lines followed in recent years in the United States. This would presuppose the extension of already existing schemes for credit transfer, mature entry and accreditation for work already undertaken or knowledge gained independently by whatever means.

The Russell report (Department of Education and Science 1973) expressed the following concern with regard to adult education:

'The service must be directed to the multiplicity of needs felt by all members of the community in their widely varying circumstances. It must be free therefore to go out beyond traditional formulae of class provision: teaching methods, duration and timing of activities, frequency and format of meetings, and all other features of the provision must be dictated by the real needs of the people and not by irrelevant traditions from the time of the "night schools".'

(para. 68)

Nevertheless, it seems that one element is still lacking - recognition of the truly individual need of the adult who wishes to pursue learning on his, or her, own, outside any formal structure, and provision for that need. Until this is found we shall not have achieved the Russell Committee's vision:

'... of a comprehensive and flexible service of adult education, broad enough to meet the wide range of educational needs of the adult in our society ... integrated with all other sectors of the educational system but at the same time firmly rooted in the active life of local communities ... readily accessible to all who need it, whatever their means or circumstances.'

(para. 3)

Without such a service lifelong learning does not seem possible to the Committee.

Similar sentiments are voiced by Stephen Brookfield (1981):

'These independent adult learners are a submerged dimension of educational activity: encounters and exchanges were taking place without accreditation from, or recognition by, professional adult educators ... A recognition of the validity and importance of this learning should lead to the sensitive provision of support by those within the formal educational system. The evidence suggests, however, that whether or not such support is forthcoming, the efforts of adults to take on the challenge of independent learning, in isolation from the educational establishment, will continue.'

(pages 26-27)

Since these learners are positively seeking to avoid the formal education system, it seems somewhat illogical to support them within it. What is needed is support from a different source, outside the formal educational context.

4 THE ROLE OF LIBRARIES

One of our existing institutions, the public library service, grew from similar concerns. It is an appropriate time to reconsider the role public libraries can play, and to build on their longstanding educational purpose of self-improvement. The thinking of the American, Samuel Gould, and the Commission on Non-traditional Study was referred to earlier. One quotation is particularly apt:

'The public library, therefore, must step into a position of leadership in bring together the potential learning components of its community or region. It must create learning and counselling centers as part of its regular service - to counsel students, to direct them to appropriate places and institutions for learning, to organize programs of its own when these appear necessary. It must associate itself more closely with colleges and universities of its area and urge them to form consortia for the purpose of offering learning opportunities and determining satisfactory rewards for learning achievement. It must organize itself to provide personnel to guide students and sometimes teach them, materials that students may acquire or borrow, and, when appropriate, places where learning can be carried on.

The library must prepare itself for these new roles by educating and training its administrators and staff to an understanding of, a commitment to, and a skill to function in line with this broad educational philosophy.'

(page 44)

Gould sees the library as extremely appropriate to function in this way, since it is more attuned to the needs of a greater number and variety of people of all ages and circumstances than the colleges and universities, and it is closer to all parts of the community.

4.1 The Adult Independent Learning Project

The Adult Independent Learning Project, originating in United States public libraries, may have applications in Great Britain. For a fuller report on this, see Dale (1979 and 1980), and Mavor et al (1976). This experiment, which ran from 1973-1976 in selected libraries, established in the participating libraries a Learners' Advisory Service for adult self-directed learners wishing to study outside the traditional education system. Librarian and learner work together over a period of time to draw up and put into action a learning plan tailored to the learner's needs. The librarian does not act as a teacher, but as an advisor who provides support by means of information and materials. The duration and purpose of the study (e.g. educational qualifications or vocational advancement, or interest only), the level of knowledge the learner already possesses and the preferred method of study are all discussed during the drawing up of the plan. Materials are then supplied by the librarian, and used and evaluated by the learner. Librarian and learner meet as necessary to continue the process.

In the Summer of 1978, on a Churchill Fellowship, the writer of this paper visited a number of the libraries involved in the work and spoke with people who had been, or still were, Learners' Advisers. They saw the work as differing from normal reader's advisory or reference work less in its intrinsic nature than in the degree to which the learner's needs were pursued and the amount of probing into the individual's background and reasons for wishing to study. This extended role required greater personal involvement and commitment on the part of the librarian. Some subject knowledge or interest was an advantage as learners often wished to discuss their work. A systematic approach, entailing record-keeping, and the continuity of the relationship were also important factors.

Projects undertaken by learners varied widely (e.g. how to lay linoleum, how to set up your own deep-sea fishing business, poetry appreciation, making paper dolls to illustrate certain periods of United States history). From speaking with Advisers and examining records, it was apparent that much of the work undertaken was closely akin to what goes on in some of our libraries some of the time - the real difference was that the Americans had attempted to make this a clearly defined aspect of the service which the public had a right to expect, and which staff knew they were expected to deliver. Apart from some initial financial help for publicity and staff training, the libraries had coped from within existing resources.

Alongside their own work with learners in the library, and as a necessary complement to it, the librarians had in many places developed files of local, and sometimes national, educational opportunities and people who could be contacted for help or tuition. In this way, when a learner decided a class or contact was more appropriate than self-directed learning, the necessary referral could be made. For instance, someone wishing to study a language might eventually find teach-yourself manuals and records were inadequate and contact with other people in a class or informal 'circle' was necessary for the proper practice of the language. So might someone wanting to acquire a practical skill, or a craft such as violin-making. In such cases observation and work under supervision might be essential, though for something as specialised as violin-making one would need a personal contact rather than a class.

Both aspects of the American work could usefully be considered for application in this country in the development of a comprehensive service of continuing education. Such a service presupposes an information and advisory service, since people must know of opportunities before they can make use of them. Most public libraries already hold the information needed, such as details of local classes, career books, examination syllabuses; they also have files on local organizations or individuals as sources of help and information. Their staff may also be able to help with the elementary stages of counselling. Public libraries are already known to many people as sources of information, and many are still open during evenings and on Saturdays, times when people are free to seek help. This existing resource deserves to be used more.

Many self-directed learners wish to learn on their own because they cannot join a class. There may be constraints such as those referred to earlier: lack of money, awkward working hours, near-confinement to the home caring for children or sick relatives, or rural isolation. It is also possible that the interest is so individual that there is likely to be no appropriate class (the writer's own interest in this Project for example). To people in such a position libraries can offer not only materials but also particular skills in the retrieval of knowledge which it would be useful for the learner to acquire. Professional library staff themselves have attained a considerable level of educational achievement in order to qualify as librarians: all have acquired study skills, most have special interests or hobbies, and some have degrees. Some of this expertise could be made available to learners, provided it was clearly understood that there was no intention of masquerading as a qualified teacher. However, some special training would be needed.

4.2 A possible plan of action

A plan of action might be as follows:

i) To develop and publicise a referral system. Much of the material and knowledge is already available. This would be the least costly element to develop, and is recognised by the public as a library function. Several of the developing Educational Advisory and Information Centres are based on public libraries, and libraries are seen by Linda Butler (1981), of the Advisory Project, as suitable locations.

ii) To ensure that all appropriate local agencies (e.g. WEA; university extra-mural departments; college, polytechnic and university libraries; careers offices; Citizens' Advice Bureaux; voluntary organizations; the local press) know what is being considered and to encourage co-operation.

iii) To train a few Learners' Advisers in pilot schemes. To include in this training some elementary counselling, so that the referral system can advise as well as inform. To involve local agencies as in (ii).

v) To build on local resources, bearing in mind the need for a nation-wide service. To seek to co-ordinate pilot schemes to this end. To engage the interest and co-operation of national bodies (e.g. Associaton of County Councils, Association of Metropolitan Authorities, Society of Education Officers, Council for Educational Technology, DES, Library Association, WEA, NIAE, TUC).

In this way the pause in the development of formal continuing education brought about by budget cuts may be used to improve services for self-directed learners, and the whole movement thus become more flexible and effective.

4.3 Problem solving

Attention has been focussed deliberately on one group of learners - the truly independent learners, who, for one reason or another, wish to study outside the formal system and to follow their own learning path. They will normally be studying part-time and intermittently. The library needs of the other part-time students indicated in the earlier section will be catered for almost exclusively by academic libraries, where they belong to institutions, in some cases by a mixture of academic and public library support, and sometimes solely by the public library. In most cases, however, except for those undertaking higher degrees on a part-time basis, the library needs are likely to be slight and the nature of the request a straightforward demand for a particular title, since the study will be guided. The needs of traditional part-time students are discussed in detail in the paper by Simpson (1983).

The introduction of a service for independent learners, based on the public library, appears to face two major problems, which are linked to that of finding resources. Firstly, it is impossible to estimate with any degree of accuracy the numbers involved. Some 33% of the population use the public library service. About a third to half of all adults engage in continuing education during their life time according to Education Digest 1981. It is not unreasonable to assume that there is considerable overlap between the two populations, so, in a sense, the public library is already offering a service. One could go on to extrapolate that possibly one third of the existing library users would use the Learners' Advisory Service, if it existed, and that, of these, perhaps 10% would use it at any one time, thus arriving at a figure of around 1% of the population actively engaged.

The second problem is the proverbial 'chicken and egg'. We know that work along the lines suggested already goes on informally in some branch libraries some of the time. However, until it is seen as a recognised part of the service not all those who would make use of it will come forward, nor will all the staff make the effort. Until identifiable numbers come forward demanding such a service, it is difficult for planners to prove evidence of need to back bids for resources, or the switching of resources. The studies referred to earlier may help. In such a situation, and in the present difficult climate, one can only move forward slowly, and incrementally, in an act of faith. If such work can be started in co-operation with others, great benefits may accrue.

The public library system is part of a network of libraries. Independent learners need access to all parts of that network if they are to obtain the necessary resources. If public libraries could be made the first port-of-call, or screening mechanism, referring to other local academic and special libraries where appropriate, the strain on those libraries in providing a service to independent learners should not be too great to bear, constrained as they rightly are firstly by the need to serve their own readers.

If we are to realise the ideal of a comprehensive system of continuing education which takes account of the needs of all learners, then something must be done. To return to the quotation started at the beginning of this paper, and to complete it:

'The goal of adult learning, as in all learning, must be independence through the achievement of competence and this can only occur, ultimately, when the student assumes responsibility for his or her own learning. The failure of much adult education lies in a general failure to make this fact central to the organisation of provision. Instead we have a perpetuation of dependence on the tutor as the fount of knowledge, partly through the outmoded expectations of adult students themselves and partly through the economic needs of tutors to ensure a continuing class, and hence a continuing income. There is no simple overnight solution; change in a humane and caring institution, is a gradual process and we have a long way to go before we have achieved anything like the pattern we see as desirable.'

(Wilson 1980)

LIBRARIES SHOULD BE AN IMPORTANT MOTIF IN SUCH A PATTERN

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THE LIBRARY VISIT - EVOLUTION OF A PRACTICAL EXERCISE

Rosemary Moon
Subject Librarian, City of London Polytechnic

The Subject Librarian in Accountancy at City of London Polytechnic describes her experience of co-operating with a member of the academic staff in developing a user education programme for part-time students on the BEC HNC Conversion course.

It is obvious that part-time students vary in age, maturity, experience, educational achievement, professional skill, general knowledge and so on. The only common factor linking all the members of a class is probably the course of study they are attending. It is not possible, therefore, to propose a programme of library user education for all part-time students - their needs will be as varied as their backgrounds. However, it is important to introduce part-time students to the resources at their disposal, since many of them do not even realise that they are entitled to use the library.

It should be possible to construct a user education programme tailored to suit the needs of the individual courses and there follows a report on such a programme, developed over a period of three years for the students of the BEC HNC Conversion Course.

1979

The lecturer teaching Communication Studies approached the Subject Librarian with a view to designing a library visit for new students which would be more than just the traditional introductory tour. The visit was to include practical work and would be an exercise in communication which would be relevant to their course.

The Subject Librarian prepared for the lecturer a summary of the resources available in the library and the method of using the microfiche catalogue and subject index. A selection of possible questions for a practical exercise was also provided. This information was abridged by the lecturer and used to produce the first work sheet given to students (Appendix 1).

1980

Since the 20 minutes allocated to the exercise in 1979 proved too short, it was suggested that students should visit the library for 30 minutes. The Subject Librarian attended the class at the start of the lesson and distributed Library Guides to the students. The class was then divided into three groups, each visiting the library at half hour intervals. During the 30 minutes in the library, the Subject Librarian gave a brief tour of the library and explained the use of catalogue. Students were thus better equipped to carry out the exercises set. Each group was sub-divided into groups of 2 or 3 people and different sets of questions were distributed so that students were not all looking for the same items. (Appendix 2)

1981

A modified version of the previous year's experiment was used. Students visited the library for about 30 minutes and were divided into two groups of 5-6 people. The groups were greeted by the Subject Librarian who briefly outlined the object of the visit, the use of the catalogue and the layout of the library. The groups then separated for the practical work and the Subject Librarian remained available to help if necessary (Appendix 3).

RESULTS

Each year the exercise seemed more successful than ever. The students reported that they enjoyed the visit and learnt a great deal from it. It was often evident that the time allocated was too short and some students who had not completed the practical work did not want to leave the library.

The 1981 version of the practical work set proved the most successful because it took the form of a questionnaire requiring written answers. Students therefore derived satisfaction from their achievements in library use and enjoyed reporting on their discoveries when they returned to their class.

CONCLUSIONS

All part-time students need an introduction to their library. Some need this more than others, but, in the experience of the lecturer involved with this exercise, all students need this kind of teaching - even postgraduate students.

However, part-time students are at different levels of experience and maturity and this particular exercise could suit some and only offend others, therefore similar programmes need to be developed, tailored to suit the needs of individual courses.

The traditional library tour conveys so many facts that most are forgotten within a very short time. Practical work is therefore important because practice is the most effective method of developing efficiency in library use. Exercises should be as short as possible (since it takes the novice much longer to find his way around the library than the librarian realises), they should require written answers (because there is great value in achievement and students will feel that the time is well spent if they have something to show for it) and help should be available for those who are too slow or obviously confused. Small groups of up to 5 people are best since the members work together and pool their experience.

This kind of exercise requires co-operation with the part-time teaching staff since the library will need to take valuable teaching time, but response from the students has shown that they found their visit to the library both interesting and useful and those concerned with this practical introduction to the library are convinced that it is worthwhile.

The success of this experiment also highlights the possibilities for fruitful co-operation between teaching staff and library staff. (Appendix 4)

APPENDIX 1

Registration

Present fee receipt as evidence of membership of the Polytechnic. Complete library membership card.

Material in the library

Books, journals, audio-cassettes, tape/slide sets, videocassettes, newspapers, company reports etc.

Access

1. Subject approach via library catalogue on microfiche

2. Author/title approach via library catalogue on microfiche

Books

1. Subject approach - look up subject term in the Library Subject Index. Note decimal number given for that subject. Find that decimal number on the subject part of the catalogue (fiches 000-999). Books under that number constitute the library stock on that subject.

2. Author/title approach - look for either author or title on the alphabetical author/title section of the catalogue. Note decimal number and number of copies in stock.

Books in the library are arranged according to subject. Each subject is given a number in the range 000-999, so the books on the shelves will be in the same order as those in the subject part of the catalogue. Books on the same subject and bearing the same number will, therefore occupy the same area of the shelves.

Tasks

1. Find 'Communication' a book for students (Deverell, Cyril Spencer) on the microfiche and then locate it on the shelves.

2. Using the author/title approach find the Encyclopaedia Britannica and look for it in the library using the decimal number.

3. Find the following videocassette on the catalogue and look for it on the shelves: 'The Budget' (Economics of the real world)

4. Using the Library Subject Index and the classified catalogue find a specific bibliography on economics. Look for your choice.

5. Find an English dictionary in the library (remember 'qr')

6. Find 'British Humanities Index' on the catalogue. Find this index in the library and use it to select a periodical article of your choice. Look for this article in the library if it is a periodical which is in stock.

APPENDIX 2

M E M O

TO: Mona Rendel

FROM: Rosemary Moon

DATE: 24 November 1980

Suggestions for BEC Conversion Part-Time Evening Communication Studies Library Visit

1. I would pop in at the beginning of each lesson, bringing copies of the current LLRS Guide and library membership cards (one of each item for every member of the class). Membership cards can then be completed at leisure and brought to the library counter with fee receipts when the students wish to join. My visit will be very short, with only a few words about the library - basic information is in the LLRS Guide.

2. Each group comes to the library for half an hour:

   Group B 6.00 p.m. - 7.30 p.m. - 3 groups
   (The first could come to the library with me when I return)

   Group A 7.30 p.m. - 8.30 p.m. - 2 groups

3. For the first 15 minutes I propose the following:

   a) A brief tour of the library, pointing out the main areas and places of interest e.g. media room, quick reference, journals, newspapers.

   b) A demonstration, in the media room, of how to use the subject index and catalogue.

      Demonstration of the use of various pieces of A/V equipment set up with films, slides.

   c) A display, near the top enquiry desk, of various types of material in the library e.g. the different types of books available (ref., loan etc.) the indexes, abstracts etc. (including British Humanities Index).

4. During the last 15 minutes:

   A practical exercise (students working in groups of 2 or 3)

   a) Each group finds one of the following books, using the catalogue:

      - Communication: book for students/ by C.S. Deverell
      - Business strategy; selected readings/ edited by H. Igor Ansoff
      - Numeracy and accounting/ by G. Blake and T. Daff

   b) Using the subject index and the catalogue, each group finds either:

      - An English language dictionary
      - A biographical dictionary
      - An encyclopaedia

   c) Using 'British Humanities Index', each group selects a periodical article, checks that this library takes the periodical, finds the issue needed and looks for the article.

   d) If time remains, each group could go to the media room and operate the equipment there for themselves (using the instructions placed near the machine).

5. I enclose 3 sets of questions for the practical session. I would give one set to each group of 2 or 3 people

   a) Using the catalogue, find a copy of the following books:

      Communication: a book for students/C.S. Deverell

   b) Using the subject index and the catalogue, find an English language dictionary.

   c) Using 'British Humanities Index', select a periodical article, check that this library takes the periodical you need and, if it does, find the article you have chosen.

   d) If you have any time left, go to the media room and use the audio-visual equipment there, following the instructions near each machine.

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a) Using the catalogue, find a copy of the following book:

Business strategy: selected readings/edited by
H. Igor Ansoff

b) Using the subject index and the catalogue, find a biographical dictionary.

c) Using 'British Humanities Index', select a periodical article, check that this library takes the periodical you need and, if it does, find the article you have chosen.

d) If you have any time left, go to the media room and use the audio-visual equipment there, following the instructions near each machine.

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a) Using the catalogue, find a copy of the following book:

Numeracy and accounting/by G. Blake and T. Daff

b) Using the subject index and the catalogue, find an encyclopaedia.

c) Using 'British Humanities Index', select a periodical article, check that this library takes the periodical you need and, if it does, find the article you have chosen.

d) If you have any time left, go to the media room and use the audio-visual equipment there, following the instructions near each machine.

APPENDIX 3

BEC CONVERSION

LIBRARY VISIT

Objective — To acquaint students with the facilities offered by the Library and to enable them to locate available information.

Method — Each student will be allocated to either Group 1 or Group 2 and will follow the given programme.

Group 1

1. Using the Author/Title Catalogue

   Find a copy of FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND POLICY by J.C. Van Horne

   Part 6 of this book is called .....

   Find a copy of OFFICE ORGANIZATION AND METHOD by G. Mills and O. Standingford

   Look in the Bibliography at the end. What is the first book given under the heading 'Staffing'

   .....

2. Using the Subject Index and Classified Catalogue

   Find a copy of any Economics textbook. Give the name of the book chosen

   .....

3. Using the Audio-Visual Catalogue

   Select any 'Wainwright's Law' video. Locate your selection on the shelves and play it for five minutes on the video recorder. Rewind and remove from the machine and replace it.

   Name of selection .....

4. Select a microfilm of the Financial Times. Using the microfilm reader/printer in the Media Room, view the film and take a photocopy of the main article on any front page you select. Usually there is a 5p. charge for this service but it will be free on this occasion.

Group 2

1. Select a microfilm of the Financial Times. Using the microfilm reader/printer in the Media Room, view the film and take a photocopy of the main article on any front page you select. Usually there is a 5p. charge for this service but it will be free on this occasion.

2. Using the Audio-Visual Catalogue

   Select any 'Wainwright's Law' video. Locate your selection on the shelves and play it for five minutes on the video recorder. Rewind and remove from the machine and replace it.

   Name of selection .....

3. Using the Author/Title Catalogue

   Find a copy of DECISION MAKING by I.L. Janis and L. Mann

   Part 4 of this book is called .....

   Find a copy of BUSINESS STRATEGY edited by H.I. Ansoff

   The overall title of Part 3 of this book is .....

   .....

4. Using the Subject Index and the Classified Catalogue

   Find a copy of any Economics textbook. Give the title of the book chosen

   .....

R. MOON/M. RENDEL

APPENDIX 4

M E M O

TO: Mrs. R. Pankhurst

FROM: Mona Rendel,
Department of Information
Technology

LIBRARY VISIT FOR PART-TIME STUDENTS

I thought you might like to know that I run the Communication in Business section for the BEC part-time evening course Conversion year. I am particularly keen that these students should be encouraged to use the library at Moorgate which has so much to offer them. I am also anxious to overcome 'library phobia' which makes the students frightened of asking questions and appearing stupid.

Rosemary Moon, the subject librarian, and myself, have arranged a visit to the library each year and every time we have gradually changed the format. This year, we changed to a totally 'hands on' scheme which was really successful. There were about 30 students involved and they came down in groups from about 6.30 p.m. to 7.45 p.m. and were allowed to take as long as they needed to do the tasks (I had a programmed learning text for them to do when they returned or before they went).

The students themselves enjoyed the work and the feedback from them was most encouraging.

I attach a copy of the instructions for your information.

c.c. Rosemary Moon

STOCK APPROACHES TO ACADEMIC LIBRARIES AND THE NEEDS OF PART-TIME STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY AT GLASGOW COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

Paul Blount
Depute Librarian, Glasgow College of Technology

Considers the ways in which the needs of evening only students on the proposed part-time new BA Social Sciences degree courses at Glasgow College of Technology could best be met. Favours the establishment of a school-based separate collection for them.

A. GLASGOW COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

1. Background

Glasgow College of Technology was founded in 1971 and in terms of the range of level of courses which it offers is akin to the multi-faculty Central Institutions in Scotland and to the Polytechnics in England and Wales. All of the courses offered are 'advanced' courses i.e. post 'H' grade S.C.E. and post ONC.

Academically, the College is organised around nineteen teaching departments covering science and technology, social sciences, management, and business and life sciences.

The college offers 43 full-time courses (14 CNAA degrees) and 56 part-time courses (5 CNAA degrees). During session 1981-82 approximately 3,000 full-time and 4,000 part-time students were attending the College.

2. Library

A new library was opened in 1980; library provision based on a single site. Area is 4,900m² and seating provision is for 500-750. Stock 80,000. Library hours are 9.30 a.m. - 9.00 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 9.30 a.m. - 5.00 p.m. Friday. During vacations 9.30 a.m. - 5.00 p.m. There is no weekend opening.

B. THE COURSE

A proposal was being formulated during 1981 for a Part-time BA Social Sciences and BA Social Sciences with Honours degree to operate from September 1982. The proposal envisaged evening only provision on two evenings per week amounting to 6 hours per week college attendance. The duration of the course would be 5 years. A maximum of 3 courses per year would be studied.

During discussions on the proposals the question of 'special' library provision was raised and the foregoing is an attempt to elaborate 'special' provision by a working group consisting of library and social science representatives.

1. Introduction

Students enrolling for part-time study in higher level courses make substantial personal effort. The Library wishes to encourage such students and it is seen as important to help them to make efficient use of their time. Within the overall library requirements of the students the main areas identified for consideration are -

a) nature of material requirement

b) access to material

c) library hours

2. Comment

Conflict exists between the broad educational aims of degree level study, particularly in the Social Sciences, and the students' perceived need for ready access to a limited range of essential reading.

The Library would not wish to favour significantly, nor to appear to favour, part-time students vis-a-vis full-time students (resource allocation calculations assume 1 part-time = 2/9 full-time equivalent): consistency in the provision of facilities to comparable groups of students on the existing evening only London University BA History or Geography degrees.

Teaching from a limited range of essential texts is feasible at first or second year levels. However, an ability to use libraries and appreciate subject information sources must be seen as part of the development of an undergraduate moving towards final year or honours courses.

The College Library is an indispensible facility available to all enrolled students. Therefore any special arrangements that the working group proposes would be limited to 1st and 2nd year students only. Students on 3rd and subsequent years would use the usual library services.

The nature of material required to satisfy the students' requirement, in terms of special provision, during the first two years can be restricted to core texts and offprints.

During the first two years students would be encouraged to explore the Library as far as they wish. In addition, the following options are offered. The options are designed to facilitate access to library material and increase the students propensity to use that material.

3. Options

i) Increase the number of copies of basic texts

Increasing the number of copies of selected titles from the present maximum of six to ten copies within the main library sequence. Both full-time students and part-time students would have access to these copies. The group rejected this option on the grounds that it was a limited response to the needs of students on the BA Social Science part-time degree.

ii) Separate collection for part-time students housed in the library

The collection would be housed in the library on closed access using a manual issue system and manned by library staff. The collection would be limited to part-time students on the BA Social Science course. Full-time students on the BA Social Science course would not be entitled to use the collection.

Several problems with this option were anticipated. First, was one of identification of entitled/non-entitled students. The implication of refusing access to full-time Social Science students was seen as being not in the best interest of library/user relations. Similarly the implication of refusing access to non-Social Science students was also viewed with misgiving.

Second, was the problem of maintaining equity between library provision for full-time and part-time students. If a separate collection were established for part-time students, housed in the library, manned and administered by library staff, the implications in relation to full-time students deserve consideration. Pressure would be exercised by full-time students for separate collections within the library to be established in order to satisfy their various requirements. There would exist an overwhelming demand for separate collections for large numbers of courses. The consequences of such demand expressed in practical terms were felt to be daunting.

iii) Separate collection for part-time students school based

Because of the many obstacles facing a degree level evening only student, in terms of library provision, an element of positive discrimination ought to be applied. Such positive discrimination would be applied in the following manner:

a) the creation of a separate collection for part-time BA Social Science students to be housed in the School of Social Science on semi-permanent loan to the School for direct use by appropriate students.

b) lecturing staff or students on the course would administer the collection.

c) the collection would contain books and off-prints and their use by students would be in addition to their usual library borrowing entitlement.

d) the collection would be financially created by a special purchase allocation drawn from the library bookfund (estimated at £500 p.a. initially and thereafter £600 ongoing).

e) the size of the collection to be determined by the number of subjects and courses studied. It is proposed that four copies of a restricted number of titles (for example, ten per course) be purchased.

f) the collection to be operated on a one-week-loan basis.

g) the collection to be operated during the 1st year and 2nd year of the degree programme only.

4. Library education needs of part-time students

Structured teaching in the use of the library is an important aspect of the students' education during the degree programme. A library introduction seminar would be arranged for the students during an evening for initial advice and it would be possible for each student to consult with librarians on duty in the library during the evening.

Within the degree submission proposals exist for the fourth block of one evening per week to be programmed for library purposes and this time could be used for assistance with library needs.

Further seminars at a later stage of the course would be tailored to needs and arranged in conjunction with teaching staff.

5. Library hours of opening

Consideration of extension of library hours outwith the present arrangements, 9.30 a.m. - 9.00 p.m. Monday to Thursday and 9.30 a.m. - 5.00 p.m. Friday; 9.30 a.m. - 5.00 p.m. during vacations, was constrained by non-library factors. In particular, the issue of weekend opening would involve consultation with the Directorate and possibly the Region because of concomitant resource related questions affecting building use, and costs such as heating, lighting, staffing, etc.

The group noted that students may use the Mitchell Library which remains open on Friday evening until 9.00 p.m. and is open on Saturday between 9.30 a.m. and 5.00 p.m.

6. Implications of a School-based collection for BA Social Science part-time students for existing and proposed degree level evening only courses

The College, at present, accommodates two evening only degree level courses. There are no proposals contained within the quinquennium development plan for evening only degree level courses to be offered additional to the BA Social Science.

Summary of present situation and proposed courses:

a) Existing courses	Total nos.
BSc Electrical Engineering	56
BSc Mechanical Engineering	32
BSc Metallurgy and Materials	20
BA Geography) evening only	
BA History) London University external degee	25

b) Proposed courses*	FTE.
start 1983/84 BA Health and Nursing Studies 3 years PT	12
1984/85 BA Public Administration 5 years PT	18

(*based on latest information from Academic Registrar's Office 13.1.82.)

7. Summary of proposals

Recommendation that the establishment of a School housed collection for part-time students on the BA Social Science degree be implemented. The collection to be operated during the students 1st and 2nd years. Copies from the collection to be lent to students on a one-week loan basis. The collection to be financed by a special allocation from the library bookfund.

THE USE OF COLLEGE-PRODUCED AUDIO CASSETTES

Carolyn Kennett,
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Dacorum College (of Further Education) Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire

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This paper deals with the possibility of libraries heavily duplicating material in order to maintain sufficient stock to meet the needs of part-time students. The Copyright Laws prevent the duplication of monographs and commercial cassettes, but college-produced cassettes are not subject to these restrictions. Therefore, the Dacorum College Library has built up a collection of its own cassettes of course-related material which can be bought for a minimal cost, or borrowed. The Library has the equipment to rapidly produce copies on request. Most college libraries can acquire the necessary equipment and skills to make recordings on master tapes and edit them to produce cassettes, but much time and effort is involved. The staff who teach English Literature, languages, and shorthand, encourage part-time students to supplement their class work and home study using the College-produced cassettes, because of the short time allowed for formal instruction in College.

In this paper, I shall consider the ways in which even a small collection of college-produced cassettes can improve the quality of stock provision for part-time students, and I shall indicate some of the practical difficulties that would need to be investigated by a librarian when starting a similar collection for his own library.

At Dacorum College of Further Education, part-time students form a majority (see Appendix 1). However, library policy about matters such as loan periods, is geared towards the requirements of the full-time students. The part-timers, who attend College only once or twice a week, tend to be at a disadvantage, because they often need the material from the Library at the same time as a full-time class but are less likely to succeed in obtaining the books they require. Shortening the loan period to increase the availability of a monograph is not an appropriate solution, neither is it possible to heavily duplicate stock on a large scale. Only multiple copies of recommended texts are kept in the College Library's short-term loan collection. College-produced cassettes have the obvious advantage that they can be easily and cheaply duplicated, on a high-speed copier which takes only three minutes per cassette. As many copies as necessary can be provided within a short space of time.

The Library has a stock of about 1,000 audio cassettes, mainly commercial tapes which cannot be duplicated because of copyright restrictions. The college-produced cassettes form a useful supplement and students have a choice of borrowing or buying copies made from the College's masters. At the end of the course, the student who has bought a tape can then re-use it for his or her own purposes.

The materials a library would require to operate this scheme include: master, and blank, audio cassettes, which can be bought in bulk; a high-speed copying machine (costing from £390 to £886 in the Telex range) and an Eraser machine (costing between £12 and £62). It is preferable, though not essential, to have a good quality reel-to-reel tape recorder with a microphone on which to make the original recording: editing out mistakes is easier on ¼" tape, and if a master cassette is accidentally damaged or lost, a new one can be created.

Background noise must be eliminated, so a sound-proof room is required for the recording. This initial capital outlay is compensated for by saving money on the heavy duplication of commerical cassettes. The cassettes are bought out of the College Library's General Allowance Fund and the 50p. made from each sale goes back into the Fund, so the cassettes are self-sustaining. A notional allowance is made in the cost of a cassette for depreciation on the equipment. For VAT purposes, it is simpler if the enterprise can be demonstrated to be non-profit making.

Since there are many difficulties involved in recording and producing tapes of a reasonable standard, not many lecturers have sufficient time or inclination to write a script relating to the subjects they teach. Recording is a lengthy process which involves getting the people concerned together and getting them used to using a microphone and then having a rehearsal.

The recording is made on a reel-to-reel tape recorder, so that a mastertape, is produced which can be edited to eliminate mistakes. The process of editing requires an experienced person who can combine linguistic and technical skills to achieve a polished result. This task is not beyond the capability of most people, given plenty of practice. The quality of the result will also depend upon the equipment and facilities available in the college; for example, each person should have their own microphone, plus a mixer, to achieve the correct balance of sound, but for our recording sessions, two microphones arranged in a V-shape to pick up an arc of sound, have proved satisfactory.

The College has produced a range of cassettes which cover: English Literature texts; play readings and poetry readings of copyright-free works that are on the syllabus (either complete works or sections); discussions of works of English Literature between two members of the teaching staff; language practice cassettes, for conversation and vocabulary, each with an accompanying leaflet; straightforward talks by members of staff on different syllabus topics such as sociology and physics, and shorthand dictation practice cassettes from copyright-free material. Each recording has its own difficulties. Where a script is involved, as for example, in the discussions of literature tapes, the person writing the material has to produce the effect of conversation, rather than a formal lecture, which might quickly bore the listener. Hence the script must be written in the form of dialogue, with academic content, to avoid a stilted and artificial-sounding result.

The scriptwriter has the reward for this effort of completing an area of work and research, through the recording of the cassette. An English Literature cassette may be used by as few as 18-20 part-time students in a year, so the overall marketing value of the tape should be considered by the Librarian to check that the time and money involved will not be wasted. If the subject matter of the cassette is tied too closely to a particular work, it is in danger of becoming obsolete when the syllabus changes. This can be avoided by broadening the relevance of the material so that it could be useful in a different context.

The Librarian has also experimented with recording performances of plays, using staff and students for the cast. A recent example is the recording of 'Hippolytus' organised by the Lecturer in Classical Civilisation. There was no time to rehearse, nor to record the play in sections, working in the sound effects, and the actors had to sight-read the text. Some actors had no background knowledge of Greek drama, so did not know what effects to aim at. However, even an imperfect text recording is better than nothing. Commercial cassettes of play texts usually cover 2 or 3 tapes and are therefore too expensive for the students to buy, even if there happends to be a commercial recording available of the play being studied.

The quality of performance can be greatly improved by appropriate casting. There is a tendency for a lecturer who has no experience of producing plays for different mediums, such as sound, to choose the cast for inappropriate reasons; in this context, by appearance, rather than by voice.

The convention to be observed is that higher voices are used to representing young parts, and female, serious roles; deeper voices are for heavyweight, older parts. Professional actors can vary the pitch and range of their voices to produce subtler interpretations of a character, but the amateur is less flexible and should be cast according to the pitch of his voice.

Having described the pitfalls and the practical details of producing college cassettes, I shall now mention some of the advantages which lecturers and students have gained from using College-produced cassettes. The Library itself has benefited, because the cassettes have attracted numbers of part-time students who would not otherwise have bothered to use the Library at all. Whilst they wait for their tapes to be copied, the students browse around the bookshelves and often select books for leisure reading, or study the magazines, making them feel more at ease in the library. The College cassettes are valuable to the Library because they last longer than commercial cassettes. The latter are lent to students and eventually wear out, or are 'mislaid', or passages are unintentionally erased by the borrower. The College's master tapes are never played, only copied on the machine. They never leave the premises and are normally handled by Library staff, so they are far less vulnerable to 'wear and tear'.

The demand of commercial cassettes on a given subject cannot be predicted, but to be sure of catering for the requirements of part-time students, a Librarian might purchase twenty cassettes, costing anything from £5.00 to £10.00 each. If the syllabus were to change, the Library would be left with twenty useless tapes, and a considerable amount of money would have been wasted. The advantage of College-produced cassettes, is that they can be scrapped if they are no longer useful since time is the most costly factor in their production.

There are not always suitable commercial cassettes available; either the subject has not been covered (which is why the 'Henry James' cassette was produced), or the level is not right for further education students. The Sussex Tapes are ideal for university students but often too complex for sixteen-to-nineteen years olds, and other commercial companies produce tapes for schools which are too simple for college students.

Cassettes provide information in a way that is as almost as physically convenient for the student as a monograph. Cassette players are straightforward to use and are virtually universal. Most students will possess one, unlike slide projectors and video-cassette recorders, which are still bulky and expensive machines. The cassette player can easily be carried around in the car, utilising travelling time on daily journeys to work or to college. Information accessible to students in a convenient form does not necessitate them sitting down to read a book. Mature students find it difficult to absorb information, as they may not have had to study since leaving school. Playing a cassette recording through several times, gives the student the opportunity to learn through repetition, which will reinforce their classwork.

I thought it would be interesting to hear from a Lecturer in English Literature, why college-produced cassettes are valuable for teaching purposes. I therefore interviewed Reba Gibb (a part-time Lecturer at Dacorum) who has worked with the Librarian, John Parfitt, recording a discussion of the novels of Henry James. Mrs. Gibb has had some drama training, and so has tried to write a script that represents natural discourse, but is structured, so that sentences are not left unfinished, as they would be in everyday conversation. In this way, a higher linguistic register is achieved. The device of a discussion allows the "straight man" to act as a substitute for the student. The "straight man" must not assume a higher level of information than the student would have acquired, but he must aim at the top end of the student's range of natural intelligence. This ensures that the student will feel intellectually 'stretched' through the effort of following the lines of argument. Since many students are used to listening to undemanding material, two voices in conversation may assist the student to concentrate for longer periods. The dialogue must flow smoothly from one point to the next, without pauses to explain difficult terms such as 'fin de siècle', so an accompanying leaflet is required to explain difficult vocabulary and to reinforce visually, what the student has heard.

Mrs. Gibb feels that the study of 'A' level English Literature is, for many students, a new and complex field. There is no possibility of tutorials or extra tuition to help her students to learn the technical vocabulary they need when discussing works of Literature. In the classroom Mrs. Gibb introduces the students to new ideas and terms such as 'the omniscient author', giving them essential verbal tools. Students may follow what she is saying, but repetition is needed for the student to understand new concepts. The vocabulary can be assimilated quickly by the student if it is heard in the context of a discussion. Hearing a literary discourse such as the 'Henry James' tape, provides the student with a model of a systematic approach to a literary work, and gives examples of what can be said about it. In addition, it helps to familiarise the student with the work of the author concerned.

A reasoned discourse will also demonstrate the advanced social skills required in debate. The theories put forward by one person are assessed and may be rejected by the other person without anger or resentment being evoked, so that the discussion will remain on an academic rather than a personal level.

As well as teaching the students social skills, Mrs. Gibb has found that recorded discussions help the students to get over the 'social stigma' of using long words which they would not normally use in everyday speech. Their self-consciousness is demonstrated by laughter or comments, when a long word is used that they do not understand. By playing a discussion tape many times in their own homes, students gradually become acclimatised to the new vocabulary and are more prepared to use it themselves.

Part-time students meet their lecturers only once or twice a week, in the formal situation of the classroom. In an English Literature lesson, the lecturer requires students to participate in discussions. Mrs. Gibb mentioned that another advantage of the 'Henry James' tape was that students became less inhibited with her in class, having heard her voice on the cassette in their own surroundings and talking naturally to somebody else. This must make her seem less remote to the students, and make it easier for them to be responsive in her lessons.

Finally, the literature cassettes have stimulated Mrs. Gibbs' students to ask questions about what they have heard. They are not critical about the quality of the recording but have been more interested in the ideas expressed in the discussions.

It may not be practical for all academic libraries to begin collections of cassettes made by their institution, but I offer it as one solution to the problem of stock provision for part-time students. Other Colleges of Further Education in Hertfordshire have taken an interest in the Library's cassette-making service. With recent technological advances, it should be possible to extend the potential of this scheme to include video-tapes (which would combine the benefits of receiving aural and visual information at the same time) and computer program tapes. However, one of the real difficulties in preparing master cassettes in colleges of further education is, that it is a time consuming process for the staff involved. Time, other than class-contact hours, is at a premium, most of non-teaching time is devoted, either to lesson preparation, or to marking. It is difficult to find 'remission hours' to do this type of work in further education, whch militates against improvements in teaching, by adopting non-traditional approaches, of the kind described here.

APPENDIX I

Figures for 1980/81 Academic Year

Numbers of Students (figures taken 1.10.80.)

Full-time (including EITB, TOPS, YOPS, etc.)	425
Part-time Day and Block/release linked course students	550
Evening and enrolments (including recreational students 80-85% of total)	5,500

Student Hours

Full-time students	400,000
Full-time students EITB, TOPS, YOPS, etc.	90,000
Part-time Day and Block Release Students	230,000
Evening students	220,000

There are about 250-300 part-time staff in the College, and the number of class contract hours for part-time staff (excluding overtime by full-time staff) was approximately 20,000 hours.

NB: The number of evening students, especially for recreational classes will have increased to 6,500 - 7,000 by Spring Term 1982.

APPENDIX II

At least two elements of copyright may enter into the kind of audio-cassette I have described. The first is copyright in the script, the second is copyright in the actual recording. No problems are likely to arise where the script has been written by a teacher or other employee in the course of his duties, and where the recording has been made on a tape belonging to the Educational Authority, since in both cases the copyright would belong to the Authority. It is important not to record, without permission material whose copyright belongs to someone else. Neither should copies be made for home use of commercially produced cassettes, since although many education authorities hold licences enabling them to copy sound recordings for use on educational premises, this does not extend to use at home. (This places part-time students at a further disadvantage, since many full-time students have in their timetable periods of private study during which they can listen to cassettes on college premises).

LIBRARY PROVISION FOR PART-TIME POST-GRADUATE STUDENTS IN NON-SCIENTIFIC DEPARTMENTS

Nancy Hyde, Senior Assistant Librarian,
Royal Holloway College

Library provision for part-time students engaged in research in the humanities often has to be tailored to individual needs. The supporting library may have to go outside normal routine measures and beyond its own local resources to serve such students. With flexibility, innovation and extended liaison, existing resources can be exploited without incurring great expense, but more practical aids might be encouraged at national level since the numbers of such students are likely to increase.

I was surprised to hear from a speaker at a conference last summer that part-time students, an increasing phenomenon in polytechnics, were likely to begin to appear soon in universities. It sounded like something of a threat to universities, so I welcome that opportunity of making known that some of us in universities have been working with them for sometime now and that the experience can be a rewarding one.

At Royal Holloway College I have been concerned, among other things, with providing library services to post-graduate students in the Facilties of Art and Music, very few of whom have ever been supported by any grant and have, therefore, generally had paid employment to support themselves and often their families also: i.e. they are part-time students. I base my comments on my own experience with these people.

I should say, firstly that library provision for post-graduate students following the more recently established "taught" M.A. courses, usually of only one year's duration, is not very different from that for undergraduates. Such students tend to be in the College regularly, pursuing pre-determined courses of study with quite close direction. It is possible, by liaison with the teaching staff, to forecast their needs with reasonable accuracy and such needs are often common to at least a small group simultaneously.

The part-time post-graduate students undertaking research present different problems. To begin with, they tend to work individually, seldom as part of a team and they may go for long periods without any relevant seminar to attend. They are not often in the College and may live at a considerable distance. Their subjects vary widely, even within one teaching department: sources for studies of Anglo-Saxon vocabularies are not the same as those for modern playwrights. The library's response to their needs is necessarily largely on the same individual footing, but the library must be responsive. These are the people who really are "book-dependant" and without library facilities they cannot work well, if at all.

But, in the nature and circumstances of such students there is an important bonus for the library. They are mature students, well motivated as they have to be to be pursuing research in such difficult conditions. While they are co-operative and generally reliable users of library services they are stimulating and have the initiative to seek unconventional solutions to their bibliographical needs and very often cause the library to re-think some of its routine provisions. They tend to be knowledgeable, often returning to formal study after some years' experience of working elsewhere in the academic world. There can be a valuable exchange of information with them. They may not respond well to a formal summonse to attend the College at a specified time between the hours of 9.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m. to be "taught" library use, but working with them is a rewarding, very two-way experience.

However, to work with them contact must be established and maintained and this generally seems to be more successful if there is a member of the library staff consistently responsible for facilities for them and responsive to their needs. In this connection I was interested to read in reports of much work which has been done for part-time and "off campus" students in Canada recently, not only the well quoted article by Orton and Wiseman (1977) which is a survey giving the usual quota of statistics from two separate investigations, but also that by Mount and Turple (1980) about measures actually taken to provide for off campus students by the Laurentian University. The latter recounts in some detail the development of services over a two or three year period and reads like a success story. Not the least important element in it is the specially appointed liaison assistant.

The library needs to liaise with the teaching departments to make contact whenever possible with any group; e.g. through an initial seminar or less formally at a party to welcome new post-graduate students. Such opportunities have to be seized to introduce the local institution's resources and services and to assess individual needs. It is, of course, important to make contact as early as may be and before the part-time student flounders in a bibliographical morass largely in an outer darkness.

Failing contact through a group, individual approaches have to be made. Packets of information, containing library guides, application forms for various services, suggestions that facilities and collections elsewhere might prove useful, all supported by an invitation to get in touch with the liaison assistant can be sent to the student's home address and often obtain a prompt response, especially if senior staff can be in the library sometimes in the evening. Here I would say that cuts in library opening hours are, of course, a handicap to all part-time students, but that a library open until 9.00 p.m. or 10.00 p.m. on two evenings a week probably costs no more than one open until only 7.00 p.m. on four evenings and, dependant on local circumstances, could be preferable.

Definition of "library provision" for part-time postgraduates needs to be wide and flexible. Besides providing material, service and sometimes equipment from local stock, bending some regulations where necessary, provision for part-time students can consist equally of introductions to facilities elsewhere and liaison with other libraries and collections on their behalf. Nowadays no library is an island and in providing for part-time students library co-operation can be seen working at its best. It is often possible to deposit reference-type material in libraries more easily accessible to the student and to gain access to micrographic facilities and other specialist services elsewhere as need be.

Since part-time postgraduates are strong in self-help, once pointed in the right direction, I could wish there were more published directories of resources in the humanities and that they were a rather different sort of directory from the traditional ones listing "special collections".

Students whose time is at a premium need to know more exactly what is the extent and the limitations of a collection and what access and services go with it. At least the Open University has made a start in this direction, but I have the disturbing impression that while commercially published guides to the "literature" of subjects are proliferating, the more practical guides to library services and holdings are declining. The disappearance of a major work such as BUCOP is symptomatic of an assumption that all necessary supplementation of local resources can be supplied via Boston Spa - which is very far from true in the humanities field.

There are, however, other ways of making provision for part-time students who are unable to spend long hours in libraries and need to have material to work with at home. For instance, the University of London as a Central Research Fund which makes grants not only for the purchase of pieces of expensive scientific equipment but also for bibliographical materials for use of research students among others. Such items revert to the library of the college or the university when work for the degree, or whatever, is completed. Thus for some years I had my eye on an extra copy of the Oxford English Dictionary (before reductions of it were available) but instead of it gravitating to the library as I had hoped, it passed by agreement from one Ph.D. student to another and probably that was the best use for it. Other similar items seldom go unused since post-graduates tend to be attracted to specialist supervisors, and "schools" of studies using a common pool of material develop naturally.

There is something to be said for reviving the idea of a central pool of the more specialist or expensive materials for long-term loan to part-time students, the collection to be out-housed (as is only consistent with the Atkinson principle!) and accessible to all institutions of higher education. It is, of course, very much the same idea as the old "extra-mural" collections which until recent years seemed to me to be receiving quite lavish support. It was a principle more activated by the old National Central Library which maintained a central stock, albeit inadequate, than by the not inconsiderable stock now at Boston Spa. Services from the latter show serious deficiencies in the area of book provision for humanities subjects and perhaps it needs saying more loudly that the needs of post-graduate students and especially part-time postgraduates are seldom satisfied by short-term loans or photocopies of periodical articles.

Much can be done with microforms, especially if readers are lent to students for home use. Besides the proportion of manuscript and other rare material which will continue to be available only in microfilm copy to special order, there is an ever-increasing range of research material published in microform collections which can be most easily transported and made available at minimal cost.

Now that so many libraries have microform catalogues, we are reaching the stage where whole catalogues can be given to part-time or remote students, either to use on a reader at home, or with the nearest one available in their local library. This is not fantastically expensive. As college catalogues are up-dated, superseded fiches can be redistributed and part-time post-graduates come high on the desirable distribution list. The old Extra Mural libraries often had printed catalogues. A microform catalogue of a central collection is also now feasible.

Such provision would be made easier if there were on the market a really suitable portable reader, preferably for 35 mm. film as well as fiches. Such as are available remain expensive although there is a promise of a break-through with a laser technique. Until then my own college will have to continue to circulate some old Dagmars, Monitors and the like. Some of our part-time students improvise with old film-strip projects and read the writing on the wall.

In another sense we have already done that in anticipating an increase in unfunded, home-based students. When I was appointed to Royal Holloway College I was told that although the College had a respectable number of postgraduates in science, it would never have more than three or four post-graduate students in the Faculties of Arts and Music. Such students, it was said, would need better library facilities than were available at the college and could not, therefore, be encouraged. This opinion was, of course, largely based on the current assumption that students would live and work in the same place. The college, situated twenty miles from the centre of London, was a traditional one and almost 100% residential at the time.

A year later, a new Head of one of the Arts teaching departments was appointed bringing with her a continuing responsibility for the supervision of some sixteen post-graduate students, most of them without benefit of any supporting grant. Although the college had an expansion programme, it was then still small (c. 500 students) and the resources made available for its library were disproportionately smaller. Ways and means of helping this unexpected influx of the most book-dependant students had to be sought. Over the next three or four years the number of that Professor's post-graduates showed no decline. Other members of the teaching staff were encouraged and accepted additional research students and the numbers of post-graduates in the Faculties of Arts and Music equalled and then, in a halcyon year, overtook those in the Faculty of Science. This seems to me evidence of some success in our provision for them.

Flexibility, innovation, extended liaison and a readiness to exploit any unconventional means to serve such students can bring results on a shoe-string.

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PROBLEMS OF LIBRARY PROVISION FOR PART-TIME STUDENTS REGISTERED FOR HIGHER DEGREES

Anthony Quinsee, Librarian
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The paper outlines the problems encountered by library staff and part-time students enrolled in higher degree programmes at Chelsea College with special reference to courses at the Centre for Science Education. Problems encountered by the students in general library use and in availing themselves of such services as inter-library loans, photo-copying, and short-loan collections are described together with management problems in coping with library staffing difficulties

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This paper was prepared for the Part-time Student in the Library Conference held at City of London Polytechnic on April 15-16 1982 and presented to the working roup on "Library provision for part-time post-graduate students" by Caroline Pope.

INTRODUCTION

Chelsea College provides part-time courses leading to higher degrees over a fairly wide range of courses; this study is based mainly on those registered for MEd and MPhil degrees at the Centre for Science and Mathematics Education.

There are about 120 such students each year. Most are in full-time employment and follow a course which is held one evening per week. Many live a considerable distance from the Centre (which is in Fulham) and indeed some come from as far afield as Norwich, Oxford and Worthing. The course is held at very few places in the country.

GENERAL LIBRARY USE PROBLEMS

The major factor governing use of the library is lack of time; this results from the fact that the students are in full-time employment and may travel considerable distances, as explained. Classes begin at 5.30 p.m. and end at 8.30 p.m. with a short coffee break during the evening. Many students do not arrive at the Centre until 5.30 p.m. and can only make use of the library during the coffee break. Very few are able to make use of the library for study purposes and those living at a distance can only make limited use during the vacation.

Library transactions tend therefore to come in a rush during the half-hour before evening classes start, which puts considerable pressure on the library staff and management must try to ensure that sufficient staff are available at these periods. Staff must also be prepared to deal with varying levels of bibliographical enquiry.

Postgraduate students display a wide range of library skills. All receive library instruction, albeit briefly, at the beginning of their course and are given follow-up sessions before starting on their theses. However, the assimilation of library skills is slowed because students only come in once per week and the learning process is inadequately reinforced. Some students simply do not make use of the full range of library services, although this problem is not confined to part-time post-graduates. Because of the pressure at peak periods, it is not possible to give students personal assistance in finding material on the shelves.

Communication

Because of the students' once a week attendance, it is preferable to deal with enquiries on the spot rather than defer the problem to a subsequent visit, particularly if it is found that the student did not furnish sufficient initial information to enable the enquiry to be fully answered. Sometimes students will telephone or write in to try to save themselves time and may ask staff to find books and keep them aside. Library staff may, in consequence, have to complete reservation or inter-library loan forms which would usually be completed by the reader, thus adding to pressure on staff. A high proportion of part-time students may entail library staff spending a lot of time answering telephone enquiries.

Although students all have pigeon-holes in the Centre, it is often necessary to communicate with them by post, thus adding to the library's expenses. Recall notices, overdues, invoices and notification of the arrival of a reserved book or of an inter-library loan are usually sent by post to ensure that the student brings the book with him on his next visit. There is no point in using the internal mail system for recalls if the student hasn't brought the book since another week's delay would inevitably ensue.

INTER-LIBRARY LOANS

The use of this service tends to be heavy for a number of reasons.

The students 'home' public library will only cater for his needs to a limited extent; he may, in any case, only have access to a small branch library and with the general retrenchment in opening hours, even this may present difficulties for him. As the student embarks on his special subject interest for his thesis, the stock of one library is unlikely to suffice. If there is a special library covering his topic, he may again find access difficult because of time constraints, or he may not be able to gain borrowing facilities.

Restrictions on the use of inter-lending material (e.g. theses which may only be read in the library and not taken home) will pose very real difficulties for part-time students. If the borrowed thesis is on microfilm, the reader may have difficulty in finding a reader away from the Centre. The same problems arise - incidentally - with the College's own heavily used theses which may not be used outside the library. Requests for inter-library loans may be delayed if the library staff have to ask for further bibliographic information from the student after receiving the original request.

The normal College restriction on inter-lending, i.e. a loan is refused if the material requested is available in neighbouring London Libraries - has to be waived for part-time students since they do not have time to go elsewhere. They are, however, encouraged to ask for inter-library loans from their local public library.

PHOTOCOPYING

It is important to ensure that adequate photocopying facilities are available for part-time students since an out-of-order photocopier can cause very real problems. Part-time students need to be given some priority in photocopying services, to facilitate their use of the system.

SHORT LOANS

Normal College procedure is to issue short loan books on 3-hour periods, or overnight or for weekends. The system is not feasible for one-visit-a-week students and this causes problems of availability of heavily used material. Even if it is possible occasionally to let a part-time student have a little used short loan book for a week, illness or travel problems may prevent him from returning the book the following week, thus causing frustration for other readers. There is therefore a conflict of interest between part-time and full-time readers over use of the short-loan system which is difficult to resolve. Staff are seldom able accurately to predict the demand for any book at any given time of year and other attempts to make satisfactory provision for part-time students tend to result in an over-complicated sytem.

LIBRARY STAFFING

The staffing must be adequate, as mentioned earlier, both in terms of number and level, to cope with the demands of part-time students at what may be unsocial hours. When library establishments are under pressure with a consequent review of opening hours, the needs of the part-time students are easily overlooked. To provide adequate staffing can pose very real management problems in terms of financial stringency, a problem exacerbated by the need to have the same staff present each week to deal with the same batch of students. This measure is essential to provide some continuity for the students' problems. It takes longer to get to know students who only appear once a week, and therefore service tends to be less personal. It is thus more difficult to ensure harmonious public relations and frustration on both sides can easily mount.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

It is very easy in a system catering predominantly for full-time students for the special difficulties of part-timers to be overlooked. This is particularly true when beleaguered management, under financial pressure, seeks ways of economising on staffing budgets; the provision of unskilled, part-time staff for late opening routines does not meet the part-time students' needs and earlier closure of libraries may preclude availability of the service to such students. The problem is obviously greatly increased when courses are held in centres outside London, where a student may have even less access to alternative libraries nearer his course centre or his home. This seminar is therefore timely in focussing attention on the many facets of this problem - a problem likely to increase both in terms of demand from students and difficulties by libraries in responding to this demand.

MICROFICHE AS AN AID TO PART-TIME STUDENTS

John Horrocks
Associate Head of Department of Law, Bristol Polytechnic

As a means of overcoming the problems of access to the Library, the Law Department at Bristol Polytechnic gives its part-time students sets of microfiches of basic reference materials and lends them fiche readers. The talk described why this was done, what it involved, the choice of fiche readers, copyright problems and costs.

Transcript of a talk given at the Part-time Student in the Library Conference, held at City of London Polytechnic, April 15-16 1982. The accompanying diagrams have been prepared by the Media Services Department at City of London Polytechnic from the author's drafts.

I have been asked to say a little about action we took in Bristol without any research at all of the sort we have been hearing about to-day.

I apologise for the fact that there isn't a paper summarising what I have to say. In case you think that that's because there is very little of substance in what I am going to say then I think I ought to explain that the reason why I haven't written a paper on this is that there is very little of substance in what I am going to say!

First some background, just because it is a good way to start. The department in which I work is the Department of Law at Bristol Polytechnic with 45 staff - 42 of those lecturers and roughly 750 FTE students. The department's work breaks down roughly into thirds (and I am only concerned to-day with one of them): servicing other departments (management, business students and so on); post-graduate professional people doing things like solicitors' final qualifying exams and so on; and then the law degree with about 280 full-time students. (See figure 1).

Now if I concentrate just on the degree (figure 2). This is the present position in terms of numbers. Two years ago we didn't have a part-time degree. We only started it within the last two years, which is where this talk comes in. We had a full-time course of roughly the size you see on figure 2 - 85 (about) in the first year; 70 on the second; 65 on the third. Those numbers are very rough and they change - there are usually a few drop-outs, suicides, just before the exams. I don't want to give the impression that we encourage that kind of thing but many of us don't like marking any more exam papers than are absolutely necessary. So they are very rough figures. We decided that we would start a part-time law degree. It was clear that there was demand. In other parts of the country where there were law degrees demand was buoyant; but there was nobody anywhere near Bristol doing anything like it. We had had lots of requests from people (local policemen, teachers and housewives) to do something like that; so we thought we would.

One of the problems was: how on earth do we get to them the information that they need? Now, on a law degree course, I would reckon that that's (figure 3) a fair estimate of the breakdown of an undergraduate's work. I would expect lectures and seminars to take up about a quarter of the working time; another quarter to be further reading; and half the working time I would expect work to be specifically devoted towards the preparation of seminars. I would reckon also that that (shaded, figure 4) proportion of the work would have to be done in the Law Library because most legal reference materials, of course, can't be taken out. It's like a laboratory - you can't take law reports out of a law library any more than you can take test-tubes out of the laboratory. So you can see that certainly from our point of view there is a great deal of work to be done actually in the library by a law student if he is to do his job properly.

Now there is a chart (figure 5) which I hope represents fairly the sort of time in which one might expect a law degree student on a part-time course to study. You have got to rule out Monday to Friday, 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. and an hour each side for commuting and eating because these people have got jobs or they are housewives. I haven't taken account of the period mid-night to 8.00 a.m. which is perhaps unduly lenient on my part; but I couldn't get any more on the diagram, so I chopped it off at mid-night. Now this will be a surprise to some of you but these (figure 6) are our library's opening hours - the shaded bits are when it is closed - just in case there is any doubt. I realise that it's a very ambiguous diagram; and again I have ruled out mid-night to 8.00 a.m. because the library doesn't seem to open then. It is interesting to put figures 5 and 6 together so that we get a fairly good idea of when our part-time law degree students can work in the library (figure 7). As you see there is quite a lot of time available; well that was our problem.

We decided to try to solve it by putting basic reference material - law reports, Acts of Parliament, extracts from periodicals and so on - onto microfiches. The idea was that we would lend to each student a microfiche reader, a small portable microfiche reader, which he would keep for the duration of his studies; and we would supply to each of them also a wallet of microfiches of these basic reference materials. It's as simple as that.

Two things - the microfiche reader and the mirofiches. Those were the two problems. First of all let's consider the question of the microfiche reader itself. I made a list of what I considered to be the sort of qualities we would need in our microfiche reader. First the thing had to be effective and I used myself as a guinea-pig. I sat down with a lot of different models for two to three hours at a time to see what it was like. Well I gave up in the case of nearly all of them after half-an-hour. The first thing is that all screen readers were chucked out of the window; they are useless for this sort of work. We are talking about students who have got to read for the whole of an evening - perhaps three to four hours at a stretch - so screen readers were out. We decided that the only possibility was to use one of the readers that projects the image down onto a sheet of paper. One of the advantages of that, of course, is that you can have the print whatever size you like - just stick the reader on a book if you want it larger and two books if you want it larger still; and if you want a really big picture you just angle the image onto the wall with the particular model that we chose in the end. So one of the advantages of that sort of reader was that it would be infinitely variable to suit the needs of the different individuals. Incidentally, in case some of you are not familiar with these different types of microfiche readers, one of the advantages (apart from the one I have mentioned about the fact that it projects the image down) is that you are not looking at bright lights and not looking at a screen which has uneven intensity of light. Also if you want to trace anything or make a copy you can do it on the image itself onto a sheet of paper.

The things had to be easy to use. We were going to be dealing with all sorts of people (many lacking technical skills) and the things had to be really simple - idiot proof. Many law students are idiots when it comes to dealing with simple bits of machinery. Quite all right at things to do with literature but they are hopeless at anything mechanical. So it had to be simple. It had to be reliable. One thing we didn't want was dozens of students coming in every week with broken machines. We were not going to be able to get a technician to service them or supervise them. We chose a machine which didn't have any moving parts and in which the only thing that could go wrong was a light bulb. With extra bulbs we were armed and ready to go; and I must admit the machines that we chose have been extremely reliable and nothing has gone wrong except the odd bulb.

The readers had to be cheap. We were thinking of having 150 students on the part-time degree course by 1984; so we had to have a lot of machines. We have in fact got 140 machines already; so we are equipped to see the course through to its conclusion. It is a five year course so it will only be in that year that we get an accurate idea of the number of people involved. And the thing had to be portable - law students are not conspicuously strong and we didn't want to have anything bulky; so we chose a machine about the size of the bottom half of a brief-case. It's a Fuji SP2. Some of you will have guessed that already. It costs about £80.00 and I must say that we have been very pleased with the choice we have made. No regrets at all in terms of reliability and use. Students are pleased with them. Some of them actually use them a great deal; and what impresses them more than anything is that they are not going to be charged anything for them. There is no hire charge; there is no deposit. These people are all fairly highly motivated, of course. Part-time students are. I don't know whether today anybody has mentioned that - I haven't heard anybody say it. One thing that strikes me is that they are extremely highly motivated, very responsible. They like being trusted and we have had no cause to regret the fact that we make no charges and we trust them completely. We do ask them to sign a document to the effect that they have got the things and that they are responsible for them; but that's all.

On the fiches themselves. I have made a list (figure 8) of what I think are the principal items in connection with the development and use of the fiches themselves; but there is no magic about this list and I dare say these things, to some extent, run into one another and overlap. The first problem is the question of content. What on earth do you put onto the fiches? You can't put everything on and our compromise was to try to put a representative sample of the sorts of things that we would expect our full-time students to be reading from the reference material in the library. To some extent this item is coloured by the next because of copyright. Looking ahead it was fairly obvious that we were not going to be able to put onto the fiches materials which the publishers would, themselves, hope to be able to sell to students. So the content was coloured by the copyright question. The instruction was issued that nothing was to go onto the fiches which the publishers might reasonable expect a law student to buy for himself.

The copyright question was obviously a major hurdle to surmount. It took me 6 months from the first letter to the first publisher to the final granting of permission; but in the end we got permission to copy absolutely everything we asked for without any charge at all. The only costs were correspondence and telephone calls and my odd trips to see the odd eccentric publisher who didn't answer letters and was never there when I phoned. The editor, or whoever was responsible for a certain Irish publication, was always at lunch no matter what time one phoned. One famous English publisher was so surprised at having been asked permission that he regarded that request as itself suspicious and refused for 4 months to give permission. And, in the case of HMSO, no department would admit responsibility for giving permission of any sort; nor would they reveal each other's departmental phone numbers. But in the end, by fair means or foul, we got everything we asked for without any charge.

Costing It wasn't easy to predict exactly what all this would cost because we were not sure that we would get all the money for the microfiche readers, for instance, or the microfiche themselves for the 5th year until that 5th year turned up; and it was very difficult to know what costs were going to be like in 5 years time. We have been able to buy all the machines we wanted early on and they are the costly part of the package. I have developed quite a good working relationship with a firm in Oxford which makes fiches of a very high quality. They have to be the very best possible quality because you can't expect students to read for 3-4 hours at a stretch anything less than the very, very best possible reproduction; and so we have gone to a very great deal of trouble to make sure we have very well produced, admittedly expensive, fiches. We use archival, permanent, silver halide, positive microfiches to International Standards: 24 x 98 images.

We were complete novices in this field and certainly I had no experience of micro-technology of any sort. I had to put myself in the hands of experts. This I did and it proved very beneficial. The microfiche camera I am talking about costs well over £10,000; one just can't make high quality fiches with just any old microfiche camera. It is all right if you are just making fiches that people are going to look at for 2 minutes; but not when it's 2 hours. So costing was a major item; but we work on the principle that the master fiche has 96 usable frames, costs about £10.00, and the copies are 30p. each. So we don't worry if occasionally we don't get fiches back from students - we just make some more at that price. Incidentally, in each package the student gets about 30 or 40 fiches relating to the subject studied in any particular year.

The layout of the fiche has to be planned very carefully because you can't expect students to go chasing around from fiche to fiche. They want to be able to read everything they need for a particular project or subject, seminar or topic very conveniently and they like to have everything on the same 2 or 3 fiche rather than go darting around. I would suggest that, if anyone has got ideas of doing something like this, you plan the layout extremely carefully and get the right bits in the right places.

Finding money. I cannot say very much about this because obtaining money from a large institution of higher education is a very complicated process peculiar to the institution itself. Not least, one has to develop over a period a reputation for not being over-greedy or wasteful; and one has to argue and justify one's case with care.

Planning the manufacture One has to arrange well ahead for the photography. Supervision of photography is essential. People will photograph the wrong things if you give them half a chance.

There are problems of photographing books of different thicknesses, different typefaces (some of our typefaces are 500 years old and some 5 days old and that in itself was important) and different coloured papers. So one has to plan the photography extremely carefully. This is something you probably only learn the hard way.

What do I put next? The photography itself. I usually rely on three days in Oxford to supervise photography and deal with problems as it goes along because it is expensive to remedy later. Checking - I have been dealing with fiches in different subject areas and there is a person responsible for each subject area. I try to delegate the checking as much as possible, but as a sort of general editor of the series I have to be responsible ultimately for checking. The checking must be done because I think that in particular with new part-time students you want to try to boost their morale and make them feel that they can be confident that the tutors know what they are doing, that the institution knows what it is doing, that everything is in hand and there is no need to worry. Nothing is more disastrous then their finding that the fiches are wrong and that things are not where they are supposed to be.

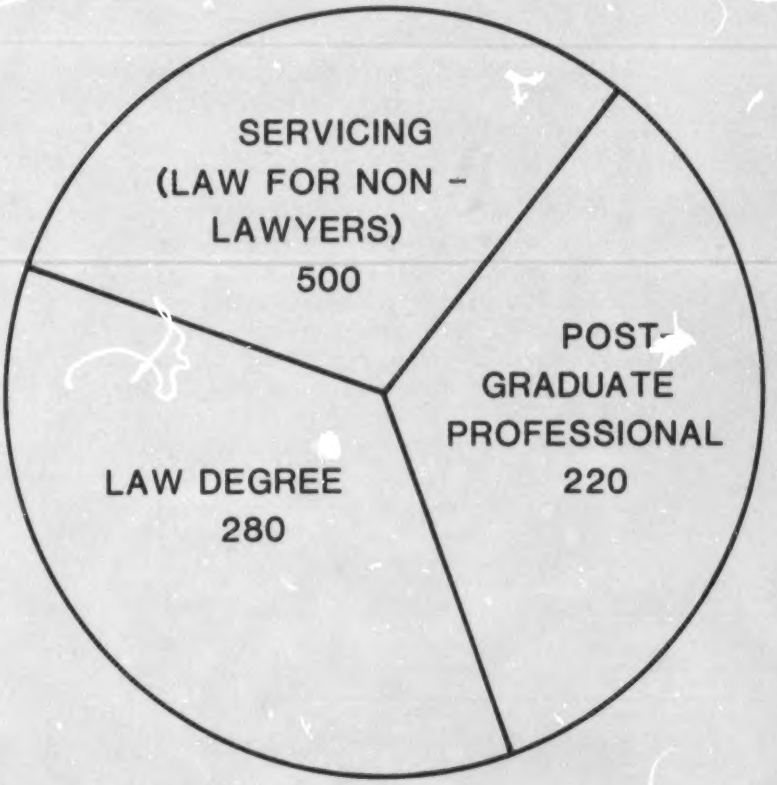
Indexing - This is only a minor problem: but when one is dealing with a pack of 40 fiches one has to have a fairly good indexing system so that students can find what they want very quickly.

And finally distribution. I have said a little bit about this already - we simply lent the things to the students; they took them away. We just keep a record of where each one has gone - a signature against the serial number - and that's it; that's the last we expect to see of the particular machine for five years and of the wallet of fiches for one year. The wallets of fiches are renewable each year and we up-date them each year as well.

Well in outline that is really all there is to it and you can see why no paper was necessary. Here we had part-time students who could not get into the library to use material which would not be let out of the library. It was simply a question of photographing it and letting them all have copies. It's as simple as that - although it was hard work.

Fig. 1

BRISTOL POLYTECHNIC
DEPARTMENT OF LAW : PROFILE 1982



students: 750 + (F.T.E.'s)
lecturers: 42
non-academic staff: 3

Fig. 2

LAW DEGREE STUDENTS AT BRISTOL POLYTECHNIC, 1982

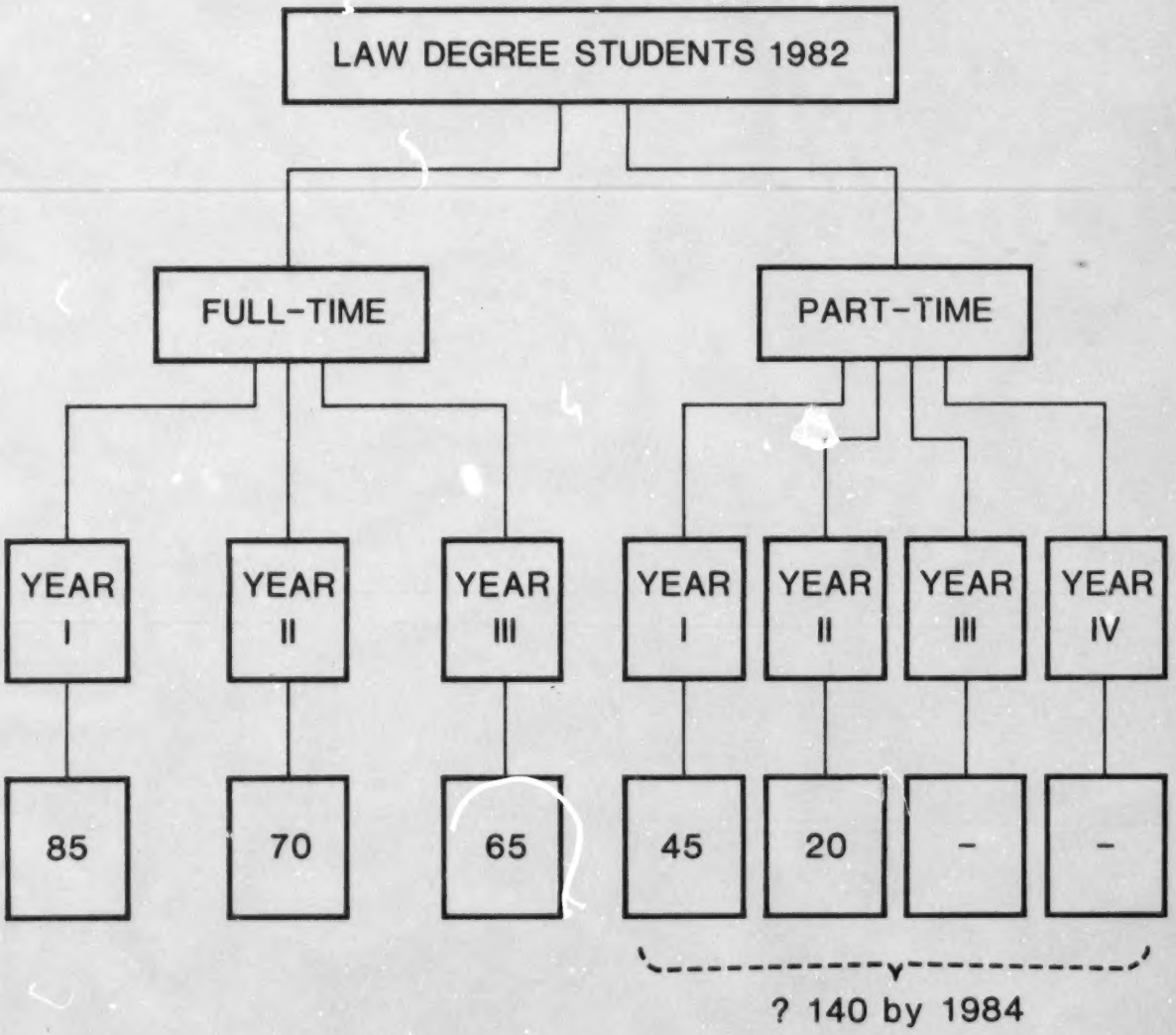


Fig. 3

PROFILE OF WORK OF A FULL-TIME LAW STUDENT

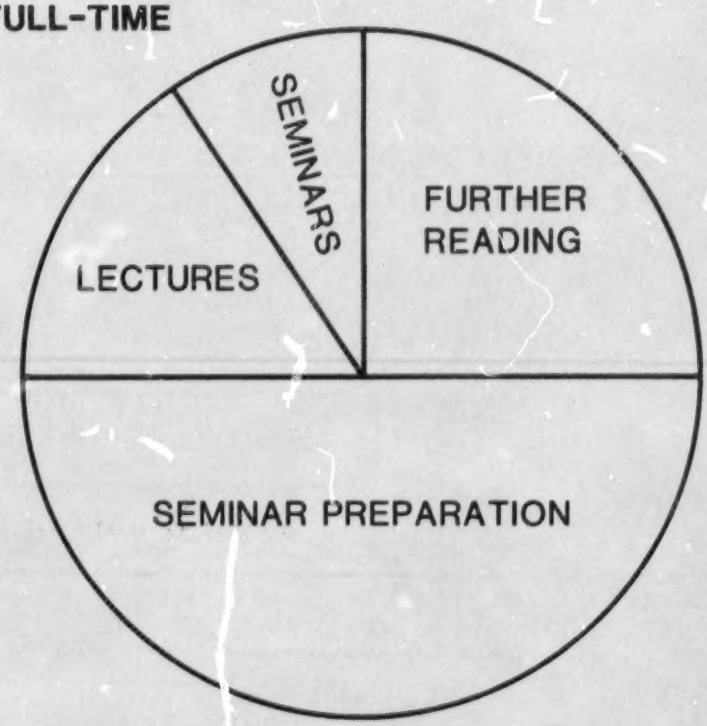
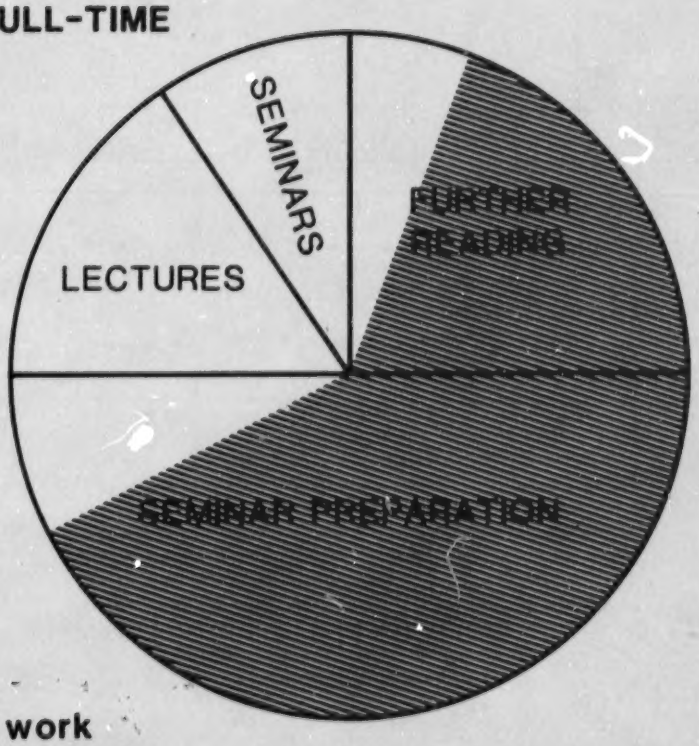


Fig. 4

PROFILE OF WORK OF A FULL-TIME LAW STUDENT REQUIRING USE OF LAW LIBRARY



▨ **proportion of work requiring "reference only" materials in law library**

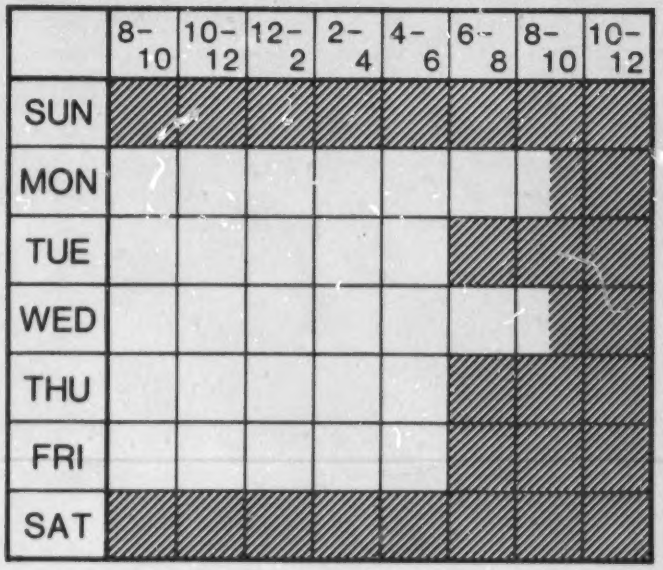


Fig. 5
STUDY TIME AVAILABLE TO PART-TIME LAW DEGREE STUDENTS

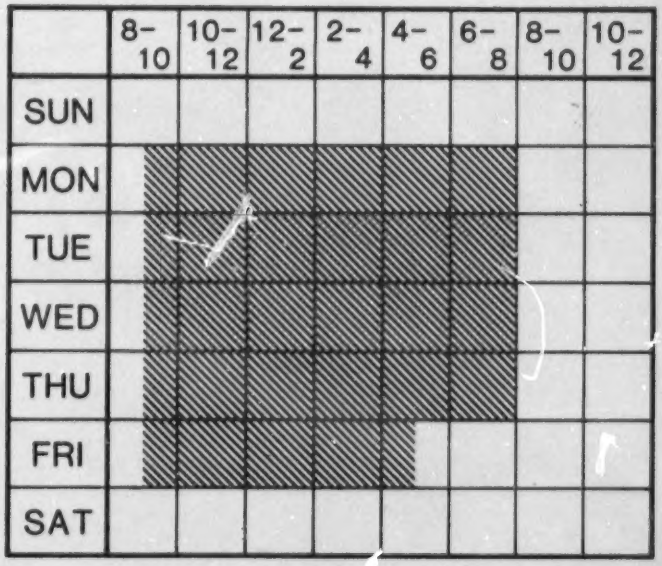


Fig. 6
LIBRARY OPENING HOURS

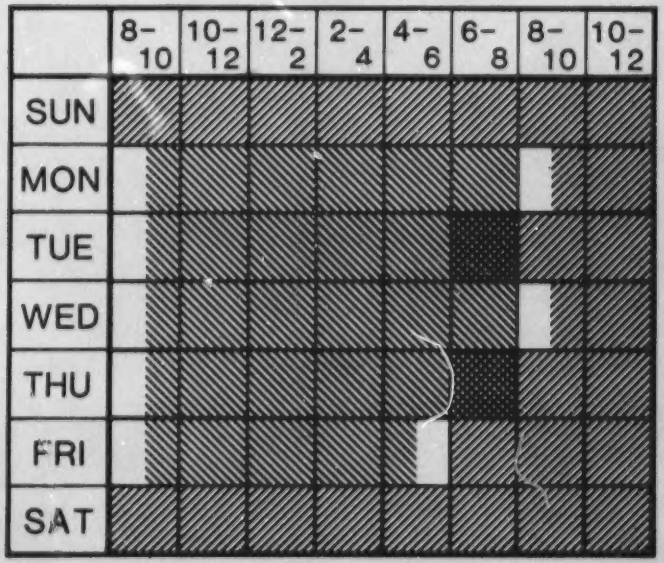
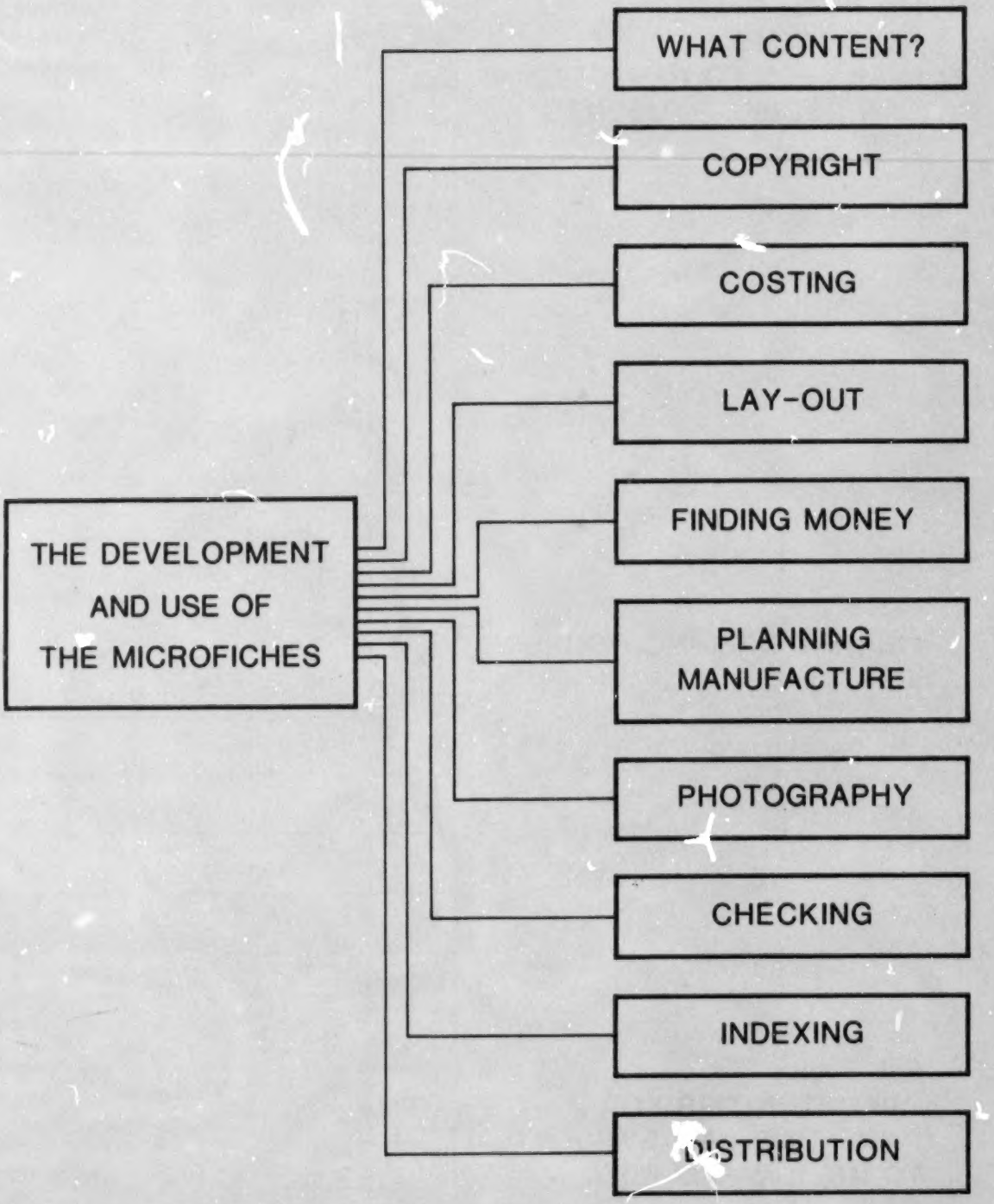


Fig. 7
OPPORTUNITIES FOR PART-TIME LAW STUDENTS TO USE LAW LIBRARY

Fig. 8
THE MICROFICHES



THE PART-TIME MATURE STUDENT AND THE LIBRARY'

Edward Dudley
Senior Tutor, Evening Degree,
Polytechnic of North London

The paper describes the Part-time Evening Degree at the Polytechnic of North London. The aim of the course is to open up access to higher education to adults who have not previously been able to participate. The author goes on to look at the apparently conflicting demands of full and part-time students within institutions and how these affect the library. The attitudes of librarians towards part-time study are important if there is to be a reallocation of resources from full-time to part-time students. Staff development could therefore lead to a more effective service to part-time students than putting resources into so-called user education. It is also necessary to move away from treating part-time students as a homogeneous body. Academic libraries should examine more closely and more precisely the community they serve and look at their users' needs, not as a block, but as individuals and as special categories of need.

' Transcript of a talk given at the Part-time Student in the Library Conference, held at City of London Polytechnic, April 15-16 1982. A background paper (reproduced as an Appendix) was circulated to conference participants in advance.

I think it is already evident that this conference is timely. One or two speakers noted "what I would have said has been said". If one looks through the abstracts and published papers, although they were all prepared separately by quite different people in quite different working environments, it's interesting to see how, running through very many of them, there are themes of immense practical importance in library services for part-time students. There are also, and it is already been touched upon today, themes of what I would call political value judgement importance as well and I want to talk about one or two of these.

Perhaps I should say a little about the job I have at the moment. It is to co-ordinate a part-time evening only degree system. The factors which led the Polytechnic to do this I think are probably common to many of you and I have set them out in the beginning of the outline (Appendix I).

There are broadly speaking two motives that lead many colleges to develop part-time courses. There is sound social sense or enlightened self-interest. In other words we actually believe that access to higher education should be wider, or in economic survival, with demographic and other trends indicating a decline in the numbers of full-time students, and if our structures, our teaching structures and library structures, are to remain relatively untouched, then we have to get more students. I think many institutions have gone through this kind of argument and this was certainly the case in our Polytechnic in the mid-70s.

What has emerged is a system that in a sense owes a lot to the experience, obviously of Birkbeck College in London, obviously the Open University, and in its structure, something that our Australian colleague has mentioned, the American system of course credits. Briefly then, what the Polytechnic has at the moment is an evening degree system in four single subjects (English, sociology, modern history and geography) and three subjects with which those four may be combined (seven altogether) to make a combined studies degree (classical civilisation, labour studies and applied economics). Mathematics, energy studies and business accountancy are with the CNAA and two or three others are being developed. Courses are organised into semesters lasting 15 weeks with two semesters a year. Five years will get you an honours degree if you come twice a week.

We have also made quite a feature of credit exemptions and transfers for previous study. In fact, of some 120 students who joined the degree system last September, over 40 successfully applied for some credit exemptions for previous study of undergraduate level (among these a number of librarians). I think the particular point I want to stress is that the Polytechnic has endeavoured to open up access to higher education.

Now this immediately brings us up against the point that already has been mentioned - positive discrimination for the part-time student. The Polytechnic had an early experience of this when there was a demand from East End Local Authorities for black social workers who hadn't got 'A' levels. The Polytechnic devised (and it's not unlike the Open College we have been hearing about), with two colleges here in central London, access courses specifically designed to get black social workers into qualifying courses to become social workers. A similar course was used to recruit black teachers into the B.Ed. and we have access courses to enable people without the usual qualifications, or people who have been out of study for a long time who want to be reassured that they can study. We have had people with 'A' levels who have said, "It is 10-15 years since I did my 'A' levels - I would rather try myself out on an access study skills orientation course first". We are thus making an attempt to recruit students who, for one reason or another, have not been able to enter higher education before. They include: old age pensioners; they include what I call, but my secretary says I mustn't, "liberated housewives", who say "I am going to go out in the evenings and he will look after the children"; they include the unemployed. Incidentally, the Inner London Education Authority is quite generous in reducing fees to old age pensioners and the unemployed.

I don't think we have been altogether successful in attracting sufficient students from this "second chance" category. The sort of people Hoggart in an article in the Observer some 5-6 weeks ago referred to when he said that, in spite of all the aspirations of Robbins and of the post-Robbins era, the class composition of higher education today remains relatively unchanged by comparison with that of 20 years ago.

On the second page of my outline (Appendix I), I come to the position of the Library - I have heard it already this morning - the apparently conflicting demands of full-time and part-time students, and I hear librarians say this, (and it seems to mirror what I have heard academics say!): "Why should we bother about part-time students"? There's enough work already with full-time students. When there is any ranking priority in courses, the part-time courses are usually held to be the first to be scrapped. I can understand that. Librarians faced with the pressure of an increasing demand from part-time students in the context of decreasing resources, will stick to what they know - service to full-time students.

It is true that sometimes a policy pronouncement by the college will help. We have heard an example from Southampton, where the Working Party on Academic Goals stressed the importance of developing courses other than those for the traditional full-time undergraduate. My Polytechnic has done the same but there is a great deal of difference between some academic body making a pronouncement of this kind and the nitty-gritty of actually implementing it, and I think it's here that academic librarians are exposed. They are exposed in a way that academic teaching departments, I feel, are not. It is not too difficult for an academic teaching department confronted with a college policy that says henceforward we will give priority to these courses to say "well yes in time, but it takes years to mount a course and in the meantime we haven't got the staff etc," whereas the impact of changing demands on a library is immediate.

It happens as soon as the student comes, as soon as the teachers begin to teach new courses and to that extent the library is exposed. I think therefore it places the whole question of the library's role - in what I would call the political process of the institution. This concerns the extent to which the library is a voice on the Academic Council and makes known there its experience. But in a political sense the library is not protected (and as a recent Head of a large department I know what I am talking about) by all the fortifications that an academic department can throw up over the years.

The library can reallocate its resources to a certain extent but it has to do so in a much more direct and exposed fashion. Mention has been made today of questions of attitudes of librarians. I think this is absolutely crucial. Perhaps this is not the audience that I should be talking to, but in considering the part-time student and the library, we have to say are we in favour (well the people here are, I assume, by the fact of coming) of more part-time students? If you ask what we are prepared to do, you come up immediately against our attitudes and values. I think it is here that librarians and certainly people teaching in library schools, do have to consider the nature of the change which is taking place and to recognise that the librarian is often the key determinant in the effectiveness of library use.

I could put it this way: I think more effective service to part-time students could be achieved by putting resources into "reorientating", "re-skilling" librarians than into so-called "user education" - a term and practice that fills me with horror. It is no longer sufficient just to say: Here is a body of students, they are full-time or part-time, that's the only distinguishing category." I think that many academic libraries now need to do what very many public libraries have done in recent years - that is not just to study the community as a shapeless entity, but to study elements of the community which is served and not served and to study them closely and precisely, and then to determine what kind of services are needed and (here the values come in) what is the priority of those services. One of the most interesting things of the development of public libraries in the last 10 years is a conscious, even scientific approach, to the study of users' needs - not as a block, not as an amorphous community, but as individuals and as special catogories of need.

Thus the handicapped, the housebound, ethnic minorities, socio/economic groups and so forth have all been studied by a number of our more progressive public libraries in order to determine how they can respond to the needs which are uncovered by these students. I think academic librarians, and we have had examples of this already, do need to do the same thing; to recognise that there are problems confronting the old age pensioner as a part-time student or the young mother whose children are off her hands or the highly movitated management trainee. Their needs, their approaches, both to the library as a system and the librarian as a person, are quite different and require different responses.

Teachers are beginning to be aware of the changes in the nature of students and how they should respond. A little while ago I chanced to meet one of our evening degree students who said: "I am not sure the lecturers always understand who we are". I asked him what he meant and he said, "Well, for example, class starts at 6.00 p.m. At twenty past six last evening, the lecturer introduced us to Virginia Woolf and the stream of consciousness and was amazed that we were silent. I said to him that from 9.30 to 5.30, I was a secretary of a small computer company, how could be expect me at twenty past six to turn on to the stream of consciousness?" The teacher immediately saw the point. It seems to me that academic librarians do need to differentiate between the widely differing needs of a rapidly changing population which includes a growing proportion of part-timers.

I think I shouldn't say very much more, except perhaps to mention finally a piece of work I am still engaged on the British Library Research and Development Department funded a curriculum development project which started while I was in the library school. It really concerns the future training and education of librarians. One point is quite clear: we are now far away enough from the dreary legacy of part-time professional qualifications of the 40s and 50s and 60s, through which many of you and I went, in order to be able to reassess part-time professional study. Among the part-time students of the future I think there will be rather more librarians.

Secondly I think it is quite clear from the discussions we have had with people in library schools and with practising librarians that there is a need in our curriculum for students to be aware more clearly of the nature of the institutions in which they work - an aspect of the politics of librarians. There is also the whole question of communication skills and personal skills which include an ability very clearly to understand peoples' needs and how to respond to them not just intuitively but also by means of research and other forms of work.

Now I have not really spoken to my outline (Appendix I) paper because if I had it would either have been an advertisement for PNL's evening degree, which I didn't intend it to be, or it would be saying what other people have already said. But I have stressed that academic librarians (just as teaching department) have to face the problem of how to switch resources from full-time students to part-time students, given that we want to have more students and given that our resourses are going to decline or at best likely to remain static. There is no other way it can be done. It is a challenge I think that librarians as well as academic teaching departments face. You can, of course, ignore the whole thing by saying let's not bother.

I recently asked one of my PNL colleagues - a head of department - developing a component of the evening degree, how he felt about committing resources to part-time work when he had an abundance of full-time applications. He said "We must plan for part-time students for in two years we shall be through this little hump of full-time applications and out the other side". If teaching departments increasingly plan resource allocation on this premise, can academic librarians do otherwise?

APPENDIX 1

BACKGROUND PAPER FOR A TALK GIVEN
AT THE PART-TIME STUDENT IN THE LIBRARY CONFERENCE
HELD AT CITY OF LONDON POLYTECHNIC ON APRIL 15TH and 16TH 1982

An Outline

All PT students have problems of library access and access to other academic, social and administrative resources. Evening PT students (PTE) suffer more because of a short time of attendance, and the extent to which an institution runs down after 17.00. Restrictions on library evening and Saturday opening hours grow.

The DES 'Brown Paper' Higher Education into the 1990's (1977) posited 5 models for development of HE Inithe 80's. Many Polytechnics, CHEs and a few universitites embraced Model E which assumed changes in the pattern and composition of the higher education student body because of social and economic requirements e.g. greater participation by children of manual workers, those who miss HE at normal entry age, continuing education at advanced level, and the "possibility to devote more resources to those already in employment".

Support for Model E was either to maintain numbers (economic survival) and/or to widen access to higher education (sound social sense or enlightened self-interest). Cuts in education since then do not alter the propositions, but make the task of deciding priorities for growth the more excruciating. There has been an observable trend in the growth of PT study and attempts to attract those hitherto denied access because of lack of entry qualifications, motivation or encouragement at 18+ - factors often expressions of class/ethnic origin/sex/age as determinants of access to HE.

Many of these factors led The Polytechnic of North London in 1977 to plan an Evening Degree System which started in September 1979. The Evening Degree and its present state will be briefly outlined.

A special feature is the attempt to attract students without conventional 'A' level qualifications, sometimes through linked 'access courses', and students with post 'A' level qualfications (e.g. teachers, librarians) and some with uncompleted qualifications. Importance of credit exemption/transfer.

Problems include many of a pedagogic nature - "re-alignment" or repackaging of FT teaching materials for older, differently motivated PT students and social, e.g. to persuade teachers of the high priority such students should receive and the different personal satisfaction in teaching them. However, experienced and mature students may appear "threatening" to a teacher's authority. There are problems in library access - physical location, opening hours, time available - bibliographical - PT students need similar, often identical, material to FT students but are often too late - short loans usually not possible - and social - many PT students have even less study and library use experience than FT undergraduates and thus lack motivation or impetus in using an academic lirbary. There may be a real or assumed (in which case it is real also) barrier between PT student user and librarians. Conventional printed and other forms of library information/publicity may help but "user education" of traditional forms is difficult or unlikely to be effective. The problem for the librarian with declining resources is that to achieve, quantitatively and qualititively, levels of service to PT students comparable to those given to FT students requires proportionately greater resources. The resources earned by PT students are usually less than those needed if the PT student is not to be a "deprived" student. Teaching departments have a similar problem - to teach PT students adequately requires more teaching work of all kinds while SSR's worsen. The only immediate route for improvement is to allocate resources away from FT students towards PT students as a positive act of "subsidy".

This requires not only decision (comparatively easy) but detailed implementation (rather difficult) and a change in teachers' and librarians' attitudes, values and long established practices (exceedingly difficult, whether there is offer of the professional carrot of opportunities for new service to the hitherto deprived or the threat of economic stick of declining student numbers, declining job prospects).

Requirements appear, therefore, to be:

1. A positive, welcoming acceptance of the fact that the increasing numbers of PT and mature students represents healthy, if overdue, social and educational change. Alternatively a rejection of this statement in which case read no further and please leave the room. Silence on important issues is evasion.

2. Derived from this an attempt to involve library staff at all levels in devising and implementing library changes for the benefit of the PT student. These will certainly involve discussion and probably resistance from some academics, some librarians, some administrators and some FT students.

It is also apparent that the frequent reference to "communications skills" and the so-called "personal" qualities of librarians heard in the course of the BLRDD funded Curriculum Development Project (on library and information work) are relevant here and pose questions in the selection, professional education, training and continuing education of librarians and information workers. The soft-centred and shapeless study of the library's community is disappearing and in many public libraries there is much more purposive, precise and sophisticated measurement and assessment of the needs and problems of users and above all non-users. It is probable that PT student are the most numerous non and under-users of academic libraries and form a significant area in which academic libraries might carry out some non-user studies.

Among the changes in educational practice which have significant implications for libraries are "study skills" advice (publications, tutorials, seminars) available to PT students and development of open/distance learning modes as a feature of PT study.

Edward Dudley

THE PART-TIME STUDENT IN THE LIBRARY: FROM RESEARCH TO ACTION

Conclusions and recommendations

CONCLUSIONS

1. Heterogeneous nature of part-time students as a group

Throughout the conference, in the papers and in the discussion groups, it was stressed that part-time students were not a homogeneous group. Even within one institution, there may well be a very broad range of students studying part-time (with differing levels of courses, modes of attendance, etc. as well as very different home and work backgrounds and experiences). When we consider sub-groups of part-time students, such as distance learners and adult independent learners, the range is seen to be phenomenal. The implications of this is that no one approach to library provision is likely to meet the needs of all part-time students.

Recommendations

1.1 Library services, promotion, and user education should be specifically geared towards clearly defined sub-groups of part-time students.

1.2 Research should be carried out to study sections of part-time student communities and their need for and use (or non-use) of library services.

2. Resource provision for part-time students

Financial allocation to academic libraries tends to be on the basis of FTE (full-time equivalent) student numbers. In many of these calculations, part-time students are very lowly weighted compared to full-time students. FTE calculations are rarely an adequate guide to the resources needed by part-time students for library provision. Indeed, some part-time courses, particularly at postgraduate level, are more dependent on library use than some full-time courses.

If more money is made available for part-timers, this will inevitably mean that other groups of library users will suffer through the transfer of resources. Strong leadership would be required by those engaged in such resource transfer.

Recommendations

2.1 In any system of formula-based resource provision based on FTE student numbers, a greater weighting should be given to part-time students.

2.2 Alternative methods of resource provision for part-time students should be considered. Part of the money derived from part-time students' fees, for example, could be specifically earmarked for the provision of a library service to them.

3. Time pressures faced by part-time students

Although part-time students tend to be highly motivated, they face particular problems of conflicting demands on their time. Many are in work and many are mature students with families. Most have very little time for using libraries.

Some part-time students, because of the nature of their courses, do not have any time when they are free to visit the library at the institution at which they are studying. All the time spent at the institution is taken up by classes. After classes, students on daytime courses may have to return to work while those on evening courses may find the library closed.

Those part-time students, who are fortunate enough to have the opportunity to visit the library, are unlikely to visit it frequently or for very long. They will face particular problems in finding their way round and in obtaining what they want because of their unfamiliarity with the library layout and library systems. Moreover, they are much more likely than full-time students to miss out on library tours and formal schemes of library instruction.

Recommendations

3.1 Librarians should take more account of the considerable pressures of time faced by most part-time students. Services aimed at part-time students should be easy and efficient to use. Particular attention should be given to looking at library procedures to see whether these can be simplified or be made more flexible for part-time students.

3.2 Consideration should be given to extending opening hours (maybe later evening opening, weekend opening, or vacation opening). Clearly, resource constraints may be a problem but there may also be difficulties in lengthening opening hours because of staff attitudes or contracts. Positive inducements though could be offered, e.g. the "nine day fortnight" (i.e. weekend working in return for a longer period off).

3.3 It should be borne in mind that any cuts in opening hours, as an economy measure, will disproportionately hit part-time students who are already disadvantaged in terms of access to library services.

3.4 Librarians and academic staff should consider collaborating to make available collections of readings in printed form or microfiche for those students who find it impossible to visit the library. Microfiche has been successfully used at Bristol Polytechnic where part-time law students have been given sets of microfiche and loaned small portable readers for the duration of their courses. Copyright clearance is of course needed before reproducing material in either printed or microfiche format.

3.5 Book boxes, containing recommended texts for particular courses, could be deposited with classes where students have no opportunity at all of visiting the library. The administration of such a scheme would require the co-operation of the teaching staff.

3.6 "Post boxes" for returning loans when the library is shut may be of particular benefit for part-time students.

3.7 As part-time students have particular problems in finding their way around the library and in learning how to use it, sufficient staffing should be provided at those times when part-timers are most likely to visit the library. More remedial education will be required on a one-to-one basis when there are difficulties in arranging formal library tours and reader instruction for students. This could be combined with individualised audio-visual or computer-based guidance and instruction.

3.8 Audio-visual materials, describing library facilities and/or how to use them, could be produced for showing in classes (where it is not possible to get the student into the library) or as self-study aids.

3.9 Course designers should be encouraged to allow "library access time" within part-time courses where appropriate.

4. Publicising the library

The time pressures faced by part-time students and the infrequency of visits by them to the college result in considerable barriers to part-time students finding out about the library. They may also incorrectly believe that they are not entitled to use it. Publicity literature is probably not as effective as librarians would like to think, although it is worthwhile in that it draws the attention of part-time students to the existence of the library and to the fact that they can use it. Liaison with academic staff is important because their attitudes towards the library are likely to influence the attitudes of and usage by their students.

Recommendations

4.1 Publicity should be distributed to all part-time students.

4.2 Different types of publicity should be considered. Initially, a "scatter" type of speculative publicity might be used. This would be cheap and short - a "come-on" rather than a detailed exposition of services. Subsequent publicity should be based on detailed knowledge of the constituents of the part-time student population. It should start out from their situation and advertise particular relevant services.

4.3 Publicity design should be a collaborative effort between librarians and a graphics design expert. It must be of a professional standard.

4.4 Ancillary library services, such as photocopying, spiral binders, and so on, should be publicised as "come-ons".

4.5 Publicity should be co-ordinated between institutional and public libraries. Part-time students are much more likely than full-time students to depend on more than one type of library.

4.6 Publicity through non-library avenues should be explored, e.g. to use stands at specialist or general exhibitions, "shop window" layouts (e.g. building societies often make their windows available), library exhibitions in non-library areas, student newspapers.

4.7 PRESTEL or internal viewdata systems might be used for advertising the library services available within individual institutions or local library resources more generally.

4.8 "Grass roots" publicity starts with contact with teachers and lecturers. If they can be persuaded of the usefulness and relevance of the library, then they will pass this attitudes on to their students.

4.9 Courses, subject areas etc., which "under-utilise" the library (and may require an additional publicity drive), can be determined through analysis of membership records. Even fairly small libraries, which do not have the resources to carry out larger scale studies, should be able to carry out this type of analysis.

5. Developing a rapport with part-time students

Part-time students are inclined to feel that they are not part of the institutions at which they are studying. They feel divorced from them and are unaware of the facilities available. For many evening students, in particular, they are simply buildings where they attend classes for a few hours each week. The problem is accentuated with vocational courses because they are often taught by part-time lecturers who infrequently visit the institution themselves and may be equally unaware of the facilities available. It is important for the library, and indeed the whole institution, to try and break down these barriers so that part-time students do not feel like "second class citizens" or peripheral to the institution. Personal contact is best - marketing the library with a good, friendly approach.

Recommendations

5.1 Consideration should be given to appointing a member of the library staff to have specific responsibility for services to part-time students. She or he should ensure that the needs of part-time students are considered.

5.2 In order to develop a "personalised" dimension to the library service, it would help if the same library staff were on duty on the same evenings each week so that a relationship can be built up with part-time evening students. This may be difficult for large libraries.

5.3 Library staff should be encouraged to wear name badges as a means of making the service less impersonal. Photographs of library staff displayed at the entrance to the library may also help.

5.4 Closer liaison with academic staff is needed to give librarians time to teach part-time students and to motivate/encourage them to use libraries in their studying. Particular attention should be given to liaising with part-time academic staff.

5.5 Where there is student representation on library committees and users' committees, nominees from part-time students should be encouraged.

5.6 Library staff should be encouraged to attend part-time courses themselves. In this way, they will become more aware of the problems faced by part-time students through personal experience. Part-time Masters courses in librarianship are important, for both individual staff development and institutional innovation, and should be supported. Institutions should release staff for part-time study by day or half-day release and should permit flexi-time working.

5.7 Professional education for librarians, including continuing education, should include training for successful client/librarian relationships.

6. Stock provision for part-time students

Many part-time students are on courses which depend heavily upon class contact and the reading of lecture handouts and a limited number of prescribed texts. This teacher-centred approach is particularly common for part-time courses geared towards externally examined, professional or vocational, non-degree awards. Such teaching and assessment methods lead to a highly intensive pattern of library use - if there is any use at all. Students often find it easier to buy the limited number of texts which they need. Where class contact is less important and a greater dependence is placed upon students' coursework and directed reading, there is likely to be heavier use of the library but the pattern of use is still going to be fairly intensive. Only when greater student autonomy in learning occurs, as in project or dissertation work, are students likely to make more extensive use of the library. The tendency towards intensive use of the library is not peculiar to part-time courses. The most common solution to the problem of full-time students chasing after the same books is to place them in the short loan collection. Alternatively, the books can be made "reference copies" for use only in the library. Neither of these strategies, however, will suit most part-time students who have very little time to spend in the library.

Recommendations

6.1 Special loan collections for part-time students might be established. This form of positive discrimination in favour of part-time students may well be strongly resisted by full-time students seeking texts which they know to be available in the part-timers' collection but which they cannot use. Another problem might be that items cannot be duplicated by the library in this way because they are out-of-print. Collections of this kind have already been developed at some polytechnics, e.g. Ulster, Teesside, and Preston.

6.2 To overcome the problem with full-time students demanding items from the part-time students' collection, the collection could be placed in the Department offering the part-time course. This is used, for example, at Glasgow College of Technology for provision on their part-time BA Social Sciences degree courses. However, it could result in other departments wanting separate collections for other purposes. Security may also be a problem.

6.3 A special collection could be placed at an off-campus centre, e.g. local community centre, public library etc. Security and the requirements of local government auditors may be problems but it would have the advantage of being available when the college library was closed.

6.4 Varying the loan length of materials may help part-time students. This could be done in various ways, e.g. there may be different loan period for the same item depending upon the status of the borrower, short loan items could be loaned to part-time students for a week, reference items could be loaned to part-time students.

6.5 Part-time students could have extra tickets on the basis that they are more likely to want to use materials outside the library than in it.

6.6 Reservations systems should be examined to see whether they could be modified to enable items to be booked in advance so that they are available to part-time students at a pre-arranged time.

6.7 Through reading lists, students should be guided as to what material is essential, what should be bought, and what is background reading and can be obtained from the library.

6.8 Academic staff should be made aware of the problems faced by part-time students in obtaining items on reading lists. Where possible, reading lists should give choices of readings.

6.9 New technology allows considerable scope for individualised learning at home through audio-visual materials and computer software. Libraries should make these available and encourage their use.

6.10 Audio-cassettes can be made very cheaply and can be used for background or essential listening. Dacorum College provides an example of their successful use in shorthand dictation and play readings. Co-operation between institutions would increase the number and range of tapes available.

7. Library access and co-operation

It has already been mentioned that part-time students are more likely than full-time students to depend on more than one type of library. This suggests that there is scope for some co-operation between local libraries in servicing these users. However, the need for co-operation between local libraries becomes stronger when the broader spectrum of adult learners within the community is considered. Part-time students are to be found not just within further and higher education institutions. They also attend adult classes, they are distance learners, and they are self-directed adult learners.

Recommendations

7.1 To meet the needs of all adult learners within the community, there should be greater freedom of access to libraries of all kinds. Furthermore, there ought to be more co-ordination in library provision to part-time students.

7.2 There should be more flexibility of funding between different library providers in order to make the best use of library services for part-time students and to establish networks.

7.3 Academic and special libraries should examine closely policies of excluding external readers to see whether they are really necessary to protect their own readers.

7.4 Some adult education students of universities are not allowed membership of the main university library. This is highly undesirable and should be changed.

7.5 Libraries which face severe resource constraints might consider an annual charge to external readers as some academic libraries already do for Open University students.

7.6 Public and academic libraries should consider all possible ways of co-operating in the provision of services and exploitation of services and exploitation of services for distance learners.

7.7 It is important that part-time students are taught to use the library as part of "learning for life". They need to learn how to use libraries generally, not just their own college or public library.

7.8 Printed guides of local library resources should be made available to part-time students

8. New opportunities for part-time study: towards independence in learning?

There was agreement within the working group on 'Libraries, independent learning, and the part-time student' on the importance of independent learning both within the institutional context and outside it. Most of the discussions concentrated, however, upon independent learning outside the institution (i.e. adult self-directed learning). Adult independent learning projects of the kind developed in the United States represent an exciting new innovation in the education of adults - an innovation in which public libraries, in particular, but also academic institutions and their libraries, could have a very important part to play. Indeed, the establishment of a community service to adult independent learners could well help in convincing library and educational managers on the political and resource front. It could also help the polytechnics and universities over their crisis years.

Recommendations

8.1 As a priority, public libraries, should take the initiative in in setting up information services in their localities on educational opportunities. These services should be a co-operative development between public libraries and providers. The educational information services established should develop a special concern for the adult independent learner and look towards providing advice of the kind given by the 'Learner's Advisory Service' in the United States.

8.2 Any service, wherever established, should be seen as part of a community service, drawing, where appropriate, upon the resources of educational institutions in the locality and the expertise/ knowledge/skills of individuals within institutions and outside. "Learning exchanges" should be explored as should access to learning via new developments in learning technology.

8.3 If necessary, the service could be aimed initially at certain sectors of the population, e.g. the unemployed or the elderly. This would carry political weight and would probably attract media interest and publicity.

8.4 More research should be undertaken into the quantity and the nature of, and the motivations for, independent learning and what is achieved by it.

8.5 Money should be sought from the British Library for the establishment of pilot projects in the area of services to adult independent learners in selected libraries and areas (both urban and rural).

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